

A 11-265  
DISCOURSE

Concerning

The OPERATIONS

The HOLY SPIRIT.

TOGETHER WITH

A Confutation of some part of

Dr. OWEN's Book

Upon that Subject.

by Wm. Glegg

Imprimatur,

May 4th 1677.

Guil. Jane, R.P.D. Hen. Episc.

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1877



# THE PREFACE.



Amongst other things, which are usually aimed at in a *Preface*, one is to invite the Reader to the *Book*. The Author of this *Book* does not think it worthy of every man's perusal, into whose hands it may chance to come; and therefore does not commend it to All.

It was written principally for their sake, who have been made to believe that the Ministers of the Church of *England* have departed from the Scriptures, in their Doctrine concerning the *Operations*, and *Grace*, of the *Holy Spirit*; which is one of those prejudices that have been instill'd into the dissenting party by their Leaders, to confirm them in their Separation. The Author thinks he has made it plain, that they do not onely accuse us very wrongfully; but that they themselves are guilty of that Crime which they lay to our charge.

And he hopes their Followers cannot think it an unreasonable request that they would impartially consider what is said on both sides, and

## The PREFACE.

judge accordingly. But if he should be mistaken in that, he has this satisfaction however; that he has done his Part, by giving them a fair occasion so to do.

If some of them should be inclined, by the weightiness of the subject, to read the *Discourse*; and yet be tempted on the other hand to throw it aside, merely because it pretends to be a Confutation of some of Dr. Owen's Principles; Dr. Owen himself will help to cure them of so unreasonable a prejudice.

P. 44.

For he has told you long since, in a Book of his, called, *The duty of Pastors and People distinguished*, that you are not to take any Doctrine of Religion on the credit of his Authority. Alas, says he, *you are in a miserable condition, if you have all this while relied upon the Authority of men in Heavenly things: He that builds his Faith upon Preachers, though they preach nothing but truth, and he pretend to believe it, hath indeed no Faith at all, but a wavering opinion, built upon a rotten Foundation.*

Now you know the Authority of the Doctor is no more than the Authority of a Man; and therefore you have his own word for it, that to build your Faith upon his Authority, is to build it upon a rotten Foundation. Whether you have so done *all this while* I cannot say; but if you have, he tells you that *you are in a miserable condition*. And if you have not, you will easily be persuaded to take this opportunity now offered to you, of examining his Doctrine by the Word of God; to which the Author does appeal as heartily as the Doctor himself can do.

I confess I am not altogether of his minde in the fore-mentioned passage; for it seems to imply, that all men are in a state of Damnation, who rely upon



## The PREFACE

upon the honesty and wisdom of their Spiritual Guides in matters of Faith. But I doubt there are some persons incapable of inquiring much further; and I hope some of these do so firmly believe the truth, upon the testimony of God's Ministers, as to live according to it; which if they do, God forbid that I should say they are in a damnable condition.

But you see in what strict terms the Doctor admonishes every one of you, not to rely upon the Authority of men; but to examine their Doctrines by the Word of God. Possibly he means no more, than that this is a duty to be discharged by all Christians according to the measure of those *Means*, Abilities, and Opportunities which God has been pleased to give them: and this surely is a great truth. But then I desire you to consider that every one of you are more concerned, to look to it, that you omit not this duty, than many other Christians are; and that for this reason, because you have withdrawn your selves from the communion of the Lawful Guides of this Church, to follow those that take upon them to lead you without any known Authority by which they do so. For if you follow these your *Leaders* into error, it will be no excuse for you, to say, *they* led you into error; because you set them up to your selves against the will of your rightful Superiours both in Church and State. Whereas if the Christians of our Communion should be led into some great mistake, (as I am perswaded they are not) by relying upon the Authority and Wisdom of their Pastors; though it would not totally excuse them, yet it would be some mitigation of their fault, that they were misled by those *Guides* and *Ministers* which God had set over them.

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P. 44.

The Doctor himself tells you in that Book, that the people are bound to hear those who possess the place of teaching in the Church. And, that if the

P. 52.

Law accounts onely such Assemblies to be Conventicles, where the Assemblers contemn and despise the service of God in publick, he had not spoken one word in favour of them.

P. 43.

P. 46, 47.

You do not wonder I suppose at these passages; for, you know, this Book was written by him above thirty years since, when he was a *Presbyterian*, as he there solemnly declares himself to be, and engaged by the Interest of his Party, to contend for some Church-decency and Order, as he there does after his manner. Indeed since that time he turned *Independant*: But however, you have no reason to conclude from thence that he has changed his minde in that other point also, of the peoples being bound to examine by the Word of God, the Doctrines of those Teachers whom they are bound to hear; or that he believes that all that is said in *Conventicles*, or written by those *Assemblers that despise the service of God in publick*, may be taken upon trust.

P. 45.

No, though he has chang'd his party, he may still be of this minde, that, *unless Ministers* (as he tells you) *will answer for all those souls they shall mislead, and excuse them before God at the day of Tryal, they ought not to debar them from trying their Doctrine.* Now this they cannot do; for if the blinde lead the blinde, both shall fall into the pit of destruction. Now unless he excepts himself from a possibility of misleading you, thus far I would not desire a fairer *Adversary*; and if you think he ought not to except himself, I cannot wish more equal Judges than your selves.

Sure I am, the Doctor must either explain himself further; or he must not debar you from trying



## The Preface.

trying his Doctrine, and enquiring whether he himself be not a *blind Guide*, whom you may follow into the *Pit of destruction*. For what he saith in general, may be applied to him in particular; that if he should *mislead* you, he cannot *wrong* you before God at the day of Tryal.

Now the truth is, although he does not say in plain terms that he is infallible, yet in that Book which I have taken the pains to consider, he lays claim, as you will see, to such an *Illumination* of minde, by the *Holy Spirit*, as differs very little from that kinde of *Inspiration* which the Apostles had.

But this will not hinder you from trying the Doctor's Spirit and way of Teaching, if you consider what he very well observed in the fore-mentioned Book, viz. that the Bereans were highly extol'd for searching whether the Doctrine concerning our Saviour, preached by St. Paul, were so or no: For he must not desire to be believed more hastily than St. Paul did, who, we are sure, spake by an infallible Spirit.

P. 44.

The more highly any man pretends to the divine Spirit, the better Testimonies he had need to produce for the truth of his pretence. No wise man will lightly take up that belief of another, which if he once gives way to, he must believe him in all things else. The brighter those Illuminations are, which any Teacher boasts of, the less reason you have to take his bare word for it; and if he be not willing that you should examine his Doctrines, he gives you great cause of suspicion, that they will not abide the Tryal.

Besides, the Doctor takes notice that what was praised in the Bereans, is commended in the Scripture: Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the

P. 44.



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Spirits whether they be of God ; because many false spirits are gone out into the world, 1 Joh. 4. 1. Prophets then, as he goes on, must be tried before they be trusted : now the reason of this holds still ; there are many false Teachers abroad in the world ; wherefore try every one, try his spirit, his spiritual gift of Teaching, and that by the Word of God. VI

I will onely adde, that the reason holds more strongly now ; for if false Teachers pretended to an infallible Spirit, even whilst the Apostles were alive to contradict them, and discover them ; much more likely are they to do so now, when they think they may do it more securely ; and therefore we had need to use the more diligence in trying those Teachers that pretend loftily, by that Word of God which the Apostles have left us in their Writings.

Now if the Doctor would have you to shut your own Eyes, and then trust to that *New saying Light*, by which he pretends to explain Gospel-Truths ; this were enough to make you suspect that *the Light that is in him is Darknes*. Or if he meant to except himself from being tried, when he bad you *try the Spirits* ; for that reason he is least of all to be excepted.

I have obeyed the Apostles advice, and tried him, as you may see in the following Book, which I was willing to make publick, because those *Reasons* which satisfie me, that he is very much out of the way in discoursing upon *spiritual things*, after this manner, may possibly seem as clear to you as they do to my self.

If there be any Sophistry in them, or *cannab Reasoning*, or perverting of Holy Writ, 'tis more than I know ; and I shall thank the Doctor for making the discovery ; which I think he is bound to do, if he can, not onely for your sake, but for mine

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mine too. For so far as I understand my self, I am not less desirous to retract any error of my own, than I am to convince you of his; And therefore, if he be as willing as I am, I shall in all probability hear further from him. In the mean time I desire you to believe neither of us, but to try us both.

If the Doctor's friends should be troubled to find him charg'd with Nonsense in the following Book, the Author has this to say for himself, that he knew no other name so fit as *Nonsense* to call Nonsense by. And he believes that he has not onely said, but prov'd also that the Doctor is guilty of Nonsense, where he has charged him with it.

He hopes also that they will not be offended with him, for taking occasion sometimes to rebuke this man for those rude Words, and unjust Reproaches which he has poured forth, for whole Pages together, upon his Adversaries of the Church of *England*. For (if it be possible) he should be taught at last to manage controversies in Religion in a more Christian manner than he has done hitherto.

And now the Author will onely say in behalf of himself, that his designe in this Book was to clear the *Truth* of that Question which he has undertaken, to every ordinary understanding, and thereby to promote the *power of Godliness*. And the best thing he can say of the Book it self, is, that it hath been thought by men of far better judgement than he can pretend to, not to be altogether improper for that end. And, if they are not mistaken, may the All-wise and good God prosper the designe of it with his Blessing.

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# THE INTRODUCTION.

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## SECT. I.



From what St. Paul saith,  
*Work out your own salvation* Philipp. 2.  
*with fear and trembling; for* <sup>12, 13.</sup>  
*it is God that worketh in you*  
*both to will and to do of his*  
*good pleasure,* it is evident,  
 that the consideration of  
 that Divine Assistance where-  
 of the Apostle speaks, is a pregnant motive to  
 excite our greatest care and endeavour to do the  
 will of God: For I suppose no Christian will say  
 that St. Paul pretended to enforce his Exhorta-  
 tion, with an Argument that had little or no force  
 in it to perswade.

The forcibleness of this Motive lies principally  
 in this Supposition, that as they upon whom the  
 aids of the Holy Spirit, which are promised in  
 the Gospel, are bestowed, may fulfil the conditions  
 of obtaining Eternal Life; so withal they may  
 miscarry through their own negligence; and then  
 their sin becomes more inexcusable, and their

punishment will be more heavy: And this is a clear reason, why even those in whom God worketh both to will and to do, are yet exhorted to work out their Salvation with *fear and trembling*.

Hcb. 10. 29.

Upon this Supposition the Author to the *Hebrews* doth earnestly exhort Christians to perseverance in the profession and practice of the Gospel: For saith he, *of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who—— bath done despite to the spirit of grace?* which he saith plainly for this end, to excite them to an effectual care in improving those Spiritual Aids whereby they were able to persevere. This I think will easily be granted, unless we can imagine that the Apostle talks at as strange a rate as Dr. John Owen frequently doth in his Book concerning the *Holy Spirit*, where he often threatens them with the day of Judgement, that look upon him, and divers of his notions in Divinity, to be *senseless and fanatical*. For we shall see that his threatnings have not that charitable meaning in them, which the admonitions of the Apostle have. He tells us that *Those by whom Regeneration* (i. e. his notion of it) *is exposed to scorn, will one day understand the necessity of it, although it may be, not before 'tis too late to obtain any advantage by it.* Now one would think it to be the Doctor's opinion, that those who shall one day be damned, might by a timely care have prevented it; and that he intended this warning to make them careful to *understand the necessity of Regeneration before it be too late.* But if you think so, you are much mistaken, and you do not yet understand this man's Principles: for throughout his whole Book he supposes a certain *powerful illumination of the Holy Ghost*, given to none but those that shall certainly be saved, to be necessary in order to a saving knowledge of Regeneration.

And

ΠΝΕΥΜΑ-  
ΤΟΛΟΓΙΑ.  
Or, a Dis-  
course, &c.  
J. O.

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And as for the rest, *the darkness that is in them is* P. 228.  
*no less effectual to binde them in a state of Sin, than*  
*it is in the Devils themselves.* Now I do not under-  
 stand how the Doctor's Warnings could be of  
 any use to the *Devils themselves*: And I do as lit-  
 tle understand why he makes such frequent excur-  
 sions as he doth, to threaten his Adversaries with  
 the day of Judgement, unless ( as one would be  
 tempted to believe, by the insulting language  
 that goes along with it ) it be some refreshing to  
 a man, so *naturally vindictive*, to think he shall one  
 day see 'em damn'd.

This is one great exception I have against this  
 Man's Book, that whereas he contends so fiercely  
 for his Opinions, as he doth all along, pretending  
 in particular, That it is *of the highest importance* P. 164.  
*to us to enquire into, and secure unto our selves the*  
*promised workings of the Spirit*; yet, supposing his  
 notions thereof to be true, it is no matter whether  
*they be enquired into or no*: for neither can we  
 have a true understanding what *they are*, nor if  
 we could, would that excite our endeavours to  
 secure them: for according to him, it is impossi-  
 ble for a man to understand a spiritual truth, or  
 do any thing that is spiritually good, unless he be  
 enabled by such an Almighty Power, as leaves it  
 on the other hand impossible for him to be *spiritu-*  
*ally blinde and dead* any longer: For this pow-  
 er, he saith, is irresistible, and he affirmeth it to  
 be *false that the Will can make use of that Grace for* P. 262.  
*Conversion which it can refuse.* Now the Doctor  
 confesses, that this kinde of blindness and dead-  
 ness, with respect unto spiritual things, is *a matter*  
*which the World cannot endure to bear of, and is rea-*  
*dy to fall into a tumult upon the mention of it.* And P. 206.  
 if he says true, I am very glad on't, because if the  
 World could not endure to hear such Doctrines as  
 B 2 these



these are, we might hope to see a great many men wiser and better than they are : for he hath stated the Doctrine of the *operations of the Spirit* in that manner, that instead of exciting men thereby to hearty endeavours after true goodness, he hath laid down Principles that will excuse them, if they be never so careless, and so hath betray'd this great encouragement of the Gospel into the hands of lazy and wicked men.

P. 206.

I shall therefore endeavour to give a better account of what the Holy Scripture teacheth us in this matter, then I think he hath done ; and I shall withal examine those Arguments wherewith he pretends so to demonstrate his notions , that *the proudest and most petulant* of his Adversaries *shall not be able to return any thing of a solid answer thereunto*. For my part, I do not think that Pride and Petulancy qualifie men either to maintain Arguments, or to answer them ; the Doctor seems to be of the opinion that they do , and much good may his advantage do him. But this I see, that Pride and Petulancy are good helps towards the writing of a *Great Book* : For if this man had spar'd himself the pains of charging his Adversaries with *Pelagianism, Ignorance, Impudence, and ill Manners*, and his frequent Tautologies into the bargain, the bulk of his Book had been taken down so considerably, that the smalness of the *Volume* would have carried an even proportion to the truth and the profitableness of his *Discourse*. And how much of that is to be allowed to him, I will leave the indifferent Reader to judge.

SECT.

## SECT. II.

**M**Y designe, as I have said, is to treat of the operations of the Holy Spirit : but before I enter upon this work, it will be necessary to remove one prejudice, which the Doctor hath laid in every man's way, that shall pretend to write against him concerning this, or any other Divine Subject. And that is, that no man's reasonings about spiritual things are to be heeded, till his minde be illuminated by an almighty work of the Holy Ghost ; (*i. e.*) till he be regenerated. This is the clear consequence of his affirming that without such illumination *a man cannot understand spiritual things spiritually, i. e.* as they ought to be understood : For if he himself cannot understand them spiritually, neither can he explain them spiritually to others ; and then let him say what he will, he is not fit to be regarded.

And there is a very great advantage he makes by this pretence ; for when he is not able to answer the objections that lie against him, he despiseth them under the name of *carnal Reasonings* ; and when he hath run himself upon manifest absurdities, he comes off with pretending that they are mysteries not to be understood without the illumination of the Spirit, and therefore *Natural* men understand them not, because they are not enlightened. 'Tis true, he makes use of Scripture very often, and he makes a shew of reasoning also, *i. e.* of propounding difficulties, and giving their solutions, and the like ; but then if you make it never so plain that he argues weakly, and that he alledges Scripture impertinently, this will not

serve your turn; for you must know that you have not yet received that *new saving Light* he speaks of, which can onely make you to understand spiritual things spiritually: for without the addition of this new Light, which onely the regenerate have, the use of Reason and Scripture is utterly insufficient to give you a spiritual understanding of them: so that you can neither be convinced that another understands them spiritually, till security be given you that he is a regenerate man; nor when you are certain of that, is he able to make you understand them so, till you are regenerated your self.

Now if this be true, then I have a very strange task, for then I cannot confute Dr. *Owen* till I can prove him to be an unregenerate man; nor can I convince any man that what I am to say is true, till I have proved the truth of mine own Conversion: (both which Arguments I take to be very improper for a Book) for though I should argue from Principles common either to all Christians, or to all men, with never such appearance of Reason, it might yet be replied, that all this is but carnal reasoning, which the Doctor and his sanctified Friends discover to be no better, by that illumination, which because I have not, I cannot understand *spiritual Mysteries spiritually*.

But for this reason, you will say our Author ought consonantly to his Principles, to have proved himself a regenerate man, before he could reasonably expect, that we should surrender our belief to his discourses of Spiritual Mysteries. You must know therefore that he hath done something towards it in divers places of his Book: for he supposes that whoever understands Gospel-mysteries in that spiritual manner wherein he hath explain'd them, is thereby proved one that hath received



received the special illumination of the Holy Ghost, and consequently, regenerate. So that if you ask how a man is qualified to understand and teach spiritual things spiritually, you are told, *by the especial illumination of the Holy Ghost*: But if you would then be satisfied that the Doctor (suppose) is thus illuminated, you must know it cannot be otherwise, because *he understands and teaches Spiritual things spiritually*; which I take to be a shameful Circle. Now whether I have injured the Doctor in any thing that I have hitherto charged him with, let the Reader judge by a few of many passages to that purpose, which lie up and down in his Book.

He saith, that *without an effectual powerful work* P. 209.  
*of the Holy Spirit creating, and by his Almighty power inducing a new saving Light into the mindes of men, they are not able to discern, receive, understand, or believe savingly spiritual Truths, or the Mysteries of the Gospel*: And again, *such is the darkness of their* P. 236.  
*[unregenerate] mindes, that they are powerfully, and as unto any light of their own, (i. e. till the Almighty creating work is done) invincibly kept off from receiving spiritual things in a spiritual manner.* Now I shall shew, by two or three instances, that the Doctor makes his way of understanding *spiritual things* to be a mark of Regeneration, and an Argument that the irresistible work hath been upon a man's minde.

When he undertakes to shew why God doth require Holiness and Righteousness of us, and affirms, that he doth not require it in order to our Justification, he tell us, *carnal Reason cannot discern* P. 334.  
*of what use it should be, if it serve not to this purpose, or one of those which he there rejects.* Now that Holiness is necessary, is one of the *spiritual things* of the Gospel, and this carnal Reason may

understand: but if you understand this Doctrine spiritually, you must understand that it is not necessary to the purpose of Justification; and this forsooth carnal Reason cannot discern. But what follows makes it plainer yet: *But the first saving Light that shines, by the Gospel, from Jesus Christ into our Hearts, begins to undeceive us in this matter.* So that he who believes, that God hath required Holiness of us as an indispensable condition of our being justified, *hath had no saving Light shining into his Heart by Jesus Christ*; for he hath not had the first of all: and this clearly shews how the Doctor makes the rejecting of his Notions to be a mark of an unregenerate man. He saith further, *And there is no greater evidence of our receiving an Evangelical Baptism, or of being baptized into the spirit of the Gospel, than the clear compliance of our Mindes with the Wisdom of God herein.* This is full and home to the purpose: for you see, that on the other hand, to discard the necessity of Holiness under that consideration, is a clear compliance with the Wisdom of God, and a mark of Regeneration. I take this to be a competent instance of the Doctor's proving himself to be regenerated, by his spiritual understanding of things; but how he came to understand them so spiritually, you heard before, *viz.* by an Almighty Power, which induced a new saving Light into his minde; for I suppose he has not a way by himself of arriving at this Felicity. This now is very plain, That if you spiritually understand the necessity of Holiness, you must not understand it to be necessary to Justification: But if you ask the Doctor why you cannot understand it as he doth, his Answer is, Because you are not enlightened and regenerated by the irresistible Work: for where this work is not, that spiritual thing cannot be

be so understood; and where it is, 'tis impossible but it should be so understood. Now then, if you ask how the Doctor proves himself to be a regenerate man, he proves it clearly, by his understanding the necessity of Holiness in that spiritual manner wherein he understands it. And at this rate I think a man may prove any thing.

Thus the Doctor tells us how *the purifying vertue of the blood of Christ is applied to us by Faith*, but in so mystical a manner, that he is forced to confess it himself; and therefore, says he, *when you understand these things, you will not think it so strange, that God should appoint this way of believing onely as the means to interest us in the purifying vertue of the Blood of Christ.* For, the truth is, before he had done with that point, he had made it so unintelligible, that he had nothing to keep up his Readers in heart withal, but by promising them, *that when they understood those things, they would not think them strange, i. e. when that new saving Light is once darted into their mindes, by which the Doctor discerns spiritual Mysteries.* In the mean time, he cautions them against those that pretend the believing he speaks of to be no more than a work of the fancy, in these words: *Despise their ignorance; for they know not what they say; when men come to the real practice of this Duty, the practice of believing that the Blood of Christ, without any more ado, will cleanse them from their Sins, they will finde what it is to discard all other ways and pretences of cleansing, viz. a sincere reformation of Heart and Life; what it is to give unto God against all difficulties and oppositions, i. e. though it be never so absurd to imagine this makes for the Glory of God, the glory of his Attributes in finding out this way for us.*

Again, after he had given such a description of



of Gospel-holiness, as any one would be ashamed to own, that pretends to an intelligible Religion, he hopes to make up all with saying, *The thing is self, as hath been declared, is deep and mysterious, not to be understood without the aid of spiritual Light in our mindes.* So that if you do not understand what the Doctor says, the reason is plain, because you have not the Spirit: and at this rate any man may write Nonsense safely enough, and put it off for a Gospel-mystery when he has done: For the thing may be understood, though you do not understand it; for it may be understood *by the aid of spiritual Light*: And if you understand it not, 'tis because you rely upon carnal Reason, and have not the Light of the Spirit. For thus the Doctor tells us, *The reason why men have other notions of holiness than he has, is their ignorance and hatred of the onely true real principle of Evangelical holiness which we have described; for what the world knoweth not in these things, it always beth, and they cannot discern it clearly, or in its own light and evidence; for it must be spiritually discerned. This the Natural man cannot do, 1 Cor. 2. 14. and in that false light of corrupted reason, wherein they discern and judge it, they esteem it foolishness and fancy.* So that 'tis to no purpose what the Natural man (a man that useth the best means he can to finde out the meaning of the Scriptures) says in these matters, till that new Light be created in his minde; by the help whereof, this Author, as it should seem, talks of sublime Mysteries, which we use to call Nonsense, and yet are blamed for it, though he confesses, 'tis impossible that we should do otherwise.

Now the Doctor is as safe as may be, if he can thus make his Reader believe, that to understand the Doctrines of the Gospel spiritually, is to understand

stand them according to his apprehensions of them, and that to contradict him, is an infallible signe of one that wants the special illumination of the Holy Ghost: For, upon these terms, whoever goes about to write against him, must do it at the peril of being reckoned an unregenerate man, and then the Doctor is secure: for we have often seen (as it is said by him) that such a man, because he wants special illumination, cannot understand the Mysteries of the Gospel spiritually, and then he cannot discourse of them spiritually, and then I think he may as well hold his tongue for any good he is likely to do with his carnal Reason.

And this is that prejudice which I am in danger of lying under with the Doctor's party, while I treat concerning the assistance of the Holy Spirit: for he uses the same artifice to support his notions in this matter. Thus he tells us, *A Com-* P. 336.  
*mand they suppose leaves no room for a Promise, at least such a Promise as wherein God should take upon himself to work in us what the Command requires of us; and a Promise they think takes off all the influencing authority of the Command. If Holiness be our duty, there is no room for Grace in this matter; and if it be an effect of Grace, there is no place for Duty: But all these arguings are a fruit of the wisdom of the flesh.* Now, as I shall shew hereafter, in these words he belies those whom he writes against; for *they suppose* no such matter as he talks of: But the Doctor, as we shall see, doth in other places mean by Grace, an irresistible force upon the mindes of men, though he conceals it here dishonestly to slander his Adversaries. Now that *such a Grace* is inconsistent with the commands of God in Scripture, may be so evidently argued, that he hath nothing to say against it, but to call such arguing

P. 187.

guing a fruit of the wisdom of the flesh, which is his perpetual refuge. But to be short, he expressly tells us, *The whole work of the Spirit is rationally to be accounted for by and unto them who believe the Scriptures*, that I like very well, and have received the spirit of Truth; but there we are all spoil'd again; for we know what he means by *having received the spirit of Truth*, viz. being illuminated by an almighty work of the Spirit: so that none but the Doctor and his enlightned ones can possibly either give or receive a rational account of the workings of the Spirit; and then if we reject his talk, 'tis because we want that *spiritual Power*, without which the minde cannot receive it. If you ask yet further what this spiritual Power is, he gives you an admirable description of it: *The spiritual power of the Minde, consists in a spiritual light and ability to discern spiritual things in a spiritual manner*. So that spiritual Light is spiritual Power, and spiritual Power is spiritual Light. *This men in the state of Nature are utterly void of; but any one that is truly sanctified, hath light enough to understand the spiritual things of the Gospel in a spiritual manner; for we have received the Spirit of God, that we may know the things that are freely given us of God.*

P. 432.

P. 433.

What others may think of this, I know not; but methinks it would grieve any Christian heart to observe the Gospel of our Saviour, that Divine means of making men truly wise and good, thus debased and dishonoured by such a senseless use of Scripture-phrases as this man makes of them, who writes himself D. D. For that which sets off all this wilde and confused talk of his, which is enough to puzzle any man at the first blush, is his perverting the true use of these Phrases, viz. *the Natural man, and the state of Grace; spiritual things,* and



and *discerning them spiritually*; with which he rings the changes so often in his Book, leaving a noise of the words in the fancies of his Readers, instead of the true, *i. e.* the Scriptural notion belonging to them, imprinted on their Mindes. That I may therefore reconcile the Reader to an opinion that I may possibly write of the operation of the Holy Spirit with more truth than this man hath done; I shall prepare my way by enquiring into the sense of this Text of St. Paul, *The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* For it is chiefly upon this place (as far as I can understand) that the Doctor builds his confidence that we cannot spiritually discern Spiritual things; and as by expounding thereof, the use of those Phrases, and such as are equivalent to them, will be understood: so the understanding of them will be conducive also to the main designe of this Book.

1 Cor. 2. 14

I shall first examine the Doctor's interpretation of this place of Scripture, and then offer that sense of it, which I take to be truer than his. Before I attempt either of which things, I must beg his pardon, if I do not think it fit to follow him, as oft as he is pleased to leave the Argument, and fall a railing against those that have other thoughts of the Text than he has, especially where he spends almost two whole Pages upon nothing else, charging his Adversaries with the want of those Vertues particularly enumerated by him, *which they greatly praise and extol*, and accusing them of *Pride, Ambition, Covetousness, Vanity, and Profaneness*, and I know not how many Vices more. Now what is all this, and a great deal more of the like stuff, which he hath swelled his Discourse

P. 222, 223.

Discourse withal, to the explanation of St. *Paul's* Text, which he was endeavouring? Suppose I had a minde to retaliate, having so large a Subject as Dr. *Owen's* Pranks, from the year 1648, to this present time, to expatiate upon; what goodly work were here for the Reader? Therefore all I shall say to this matter is, that whereas his lewd and notorious practices against the Church and State have been exposed in Print, and these charged upon him, not from Tales pickt up in the Streets, and at Gossiping-meetings; but from his own publick Actions and Writings: He hath no way to be revenged upon the Gentleman that hath done him this kindness, but by letting fly upon his whole Order, with all sorts of Calumnies and Reproaches; though 'tis very likely he is not able to fasten his Accusations upon any one of those whom he thus bespatters, since his plentiful Rage against them might satisfy any man that his Will was not wanting. Wherefore, it being to as little purpose to attempt the confutation of such loose and general Calumnies, as it had been to have answered the Doctor, if he could have satisfied his implacable malice with being at a word, and calling us once for all Rogues and Villains; I shall leave him in the quiet possession of his Talent at Lying and Defamation, and shall now onely try whether his Reasonings be as unanswerable as his Railings.

SECT.

## S E C T. III.

I Often finde it very difficult to fasten any meaning upon so slippery a Writer as this; but to my best understanding he thus explains the phrases of the Text.

1. By the *Natural man*, he means *one that hath the use of all his rational faculties, Or every one that is so, and that is no more than so; that is, every one who is not a spiritual man, is not one who hath received the spirit of Christ, one that hath the spirit of a man enabling him to know things Natural, Civil, or Political; but not the Spirit of Christ to know things Spiritual: So that the Natural man is one who is not a Spiritual man, but a Natural man onely, as the Spiritual man is one who is not onely a Natural man; or thus: the Natural man, concerning whom the Apostle saith, that he cannot know the things of the Spirit of God, is one who hath not the Spirit, and cannot know the things of the Spirit of God. And if the Doctor had rested in this Explication, I think he had been safe enough for ever being confuted. But he hath a further meaning, which discovers not it self till we come towards the end of his Comment: For he tells us, the reason why the Natural man hath no ability to discern spiritual things is, because the Light it self, whereby alone spiritual things can be spiritually discerned, is created in us by an Almighty Act of the Power of God; so that at last this is his notion of a Natural man, ( which agrees with the rest of his Book ) that he is one in whose minde spiritual Light is not created by the Almighty Power of God.*

P. 217, 218.

P. 224. Sect. 38.

2. By



P. 218. Sect.  
26.

2. By *the things of the Spirit of God*, he understands *the mysteries of the Gospel, which depend wholly on supernatural Revelation*; and I think this is the only Phrase he understands right: If he means honestly by *supernatural Revelation*, viz. that Revelation which was communicated to the World by Christ and his Apostles; and not any particular Revelation made to himself and his Party, by an irresistible work of the Spirit upon their mindes. But such a custom he has gotten to confound every thing, that within two Pages he understands by it all the Commands of God whatsoever: for through two whole Sections he discourses concerning the impotency of Man to perform the Commands of God, and makes it equivalent to an inability of receiving Spiritual things, and quotes *Rom. 7. 8. The carnal minde is not subject to the Law of God*; as if it were a parallel place to the Text in hand. For my part I cannot tie these incoherent things together; if the Doctor can, let him: He had told us in plain terms, *that moral Duties to be observed towards God, our selves, and other men, were not the things here peculiarly intended*; and that is right; *but the Mysteries depending on more Sovereign Supernatural Revelation, and that wholly*. And in this notion I shall understand him; for I cannot understand him in both together.

Sect. 29. 30.

Sect. 27.

Sect. 26.

Sect. 28.

3. He explains *receiving* of these things, by receiving them *spiritually*; and sometimes by receiving them *as they are in themselves*; and by other Phrases that are equivalent according to him. But what means he by *Spiritually*? he tells you the Natural man may so receive them as to assent to their truth; but that which he cannot do, is to assent to them under an apprehension of their conformity to the *Wisdom and Holiness of God*; nor can he

be discern their suitableness unto the great ends, for which they are proposed as the means of accomplishing. So that this it is to discern them spiritually, and as they are in themselves. He likewise tells us, *Sec. 42.* the proper meaning of *receiveth not*, is, *he cannot know them*; and that impotency is double. 1. A *Natural* impotency, that of the *Understanding*, in respect whereof, he is absolutely unable so to do, without an especial renovation by [an irresistible work of] the Holy Ghost; and this impotency, he says, is absolutely and naturally insuperable. And 2. A *moral* Impotency, that of the *Will and Affections*. The short of it is, he neither will, nor can if he would know them spiritually; so that his meaning of these words, *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God*, is this; That a man in whose minde an Eternal Light is not created by the Almighty Power of God, although the Doctrines of the Gospel be proposed to him with that evidence, that he assents to the truth of them; yet he neither can nor will understand them to be agreeable to the Wisdom and Holiness of God, and suitable to the ends of the Gospel, the Glory of God, and the Salvation of Man.

4. This clause, *they are foolishness unto him*, he hath perplexed with various interpretations. After giving several accounts on which a thing may be esteemed foolishness, he tells us, *for one or other, or all of these reasons, are spiritual things foolishness to the natural man*; which is as much as to say; there is some reason why they are so, though he cannot directly tell us what it is. If any of his Reasons will serve, let us take one for instance: That is looked on as foolish which contains means and ends disproportionate: Now he had told us, *spiritual things are foolishness in the nature of the things themselves with respect unto the minde*. I

think he means thus, that such is the nature of them, that a natural man must needs look upon them to be a means unsuitable and disproportionate to the ends of God's Glory, and Man's good; and then his interpretation runs thus: The Natural man is one who, for want of the irresistible Light, cannot discern the suitableness of the Gospel to those ends, because he cannot discern it is suitable to them. But it may be his Instances will make his minde more plain: One is that of the Philosophers of old, to whom the Gospel was foolishness: now says he, *if spiritual things had been suited to the reasons of natural men, then those who had most improved their mindes would more readily have received them than others*: By which I perceive he understands, by *these things being foolishness to the natural man*, their unsuitableness to their mindes, who had most improved them, or were wisest and knew most. But that which is somewhat stranger, is his telling of us that things of any worth in nature and morality are soonest embraced by such persons. But here things fell out quite otherwise; they were the Wise, the Rational, that made the longest opposition to spiritual things, i. e. (if the Doctor's instance be pertinent) that such is the nature of those things, that it could not be otherwise: so that the unsuitableness of spiritual things to our mindes doth at last consist in this, that the more wise and knowing a man is, the more unapt he is to receive them. But then his other instance of those to whom the Gospel is (as he says) foolishness, viz. That of his present Adversaries, is to a quite contrary purpose; for he chargeth them with *profound Ignorance and Confidence*, which cannot be sufficiently admired or despised, and certainly then their mindes are not very much improved: Now I think he says concerning



cerning these, *that they look upon the spiritual things of the Gospel as foolish and unsuited to the rational principles of their mindes.* So that all the light we have gained by the Doctor's instances to discern his meaning of this clause is, that the spiritual things of the Gospel are in themselves unsuitable to the mindes of those who have the best improved reasons, and they are look'd upon to be unsuitable to the rational principles of their mindes, *whose Ignorance and Confidence can never be sufficiently despised.* And here I desire the Doctor to make my peace with the Reader for carrying him along with me to grope after his meaning in such a tedious Labyrinth as he hath contrived to lose us in. But I do not ask the Doctor's pardon, if I have mis'd of his meaning at last, since if he please, he may write more perspicuously; if he cannot, his Friends would do well to finde out a more natural employment for him.

5. *Because they are spiritually discerned,* he explains thus; because they are discerned by a spiritual light. What light is that? he tells you, *the light it self; whereby alone spiritual things can be spiritually discerned, is created in us by an Almighty act of the Power of God.* Sect. 38.

Now from the examination of his Notions concerning the several Phrases, his sense of the whole seems to be this: That a man in whose minde a spiritual Light is not created by the Almighty act of the power of God, neither can, nor will understand the revealed Doctrines of the Gospel to be agreeable to the attributes of God, and fit to procure man's Salvation; because such is the nature of those Doctrines, that he cannot but look upon them to be disagreeable to the one, and unfit for the other: or, because they are unsuitable, or are looked upon as unsuitable to the ra-

tional Principles of the Minde; and 'tis utterly impossible he should discern that agreeableness and fitness without that new light created in his minde, because such is the manner whereby they must be discerned, that 'tis impossible to discern them, without that new light. And now that I have taken this pains to bring the Doctor out of the clouds, I challenge him to show that this Paraphrase is not the just sum of his talk concerning the Text before us: now although the naked representation of this Paraphrase were enough to expose it; yet because this is the Text, which these men perpetually rely upon, when they set themselves to *cant* down the use of reason in Religion, I shall briefly let the Doctor see, that his notions of it are either groundless, or absurd and inconsistent with themselves, and incoherent with the Context.

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#### SECT. IV.

I. **W**Hereas he makes the *natural man* to be one in whom spiritual Light is not created by the Almightyness of God, 'tis altogether groundless; for the word *φωτισμός* doth not of it self signifie one who wants *that light*: nor doth the word *ἐννοια* denote any Almighty Act, whereby a man comes to be spiritually enlightened: Nor can the Doctor shew from the circumstances of the place, any reason for this his notion; for those words *neither can he know them*, do not infer, that a man cannot know them without such an irresistible light, as he supposes, nor is there the least mention of any such thing in the whole Context. He tells us indeed that *St. Paul* *plenty*  
*fully*

*fully shews* elsewhere, that this Light must be created in us by Almightyness; and he instanceth in 2 Cor. 4. 6. I shall in due place prove that St. *Paul* shews no such thing in that Text: But admit he did, yet it does not presently follow that St. *Paul* does in this place mean by the Natural man, one in whom this Light is not created; for 'tis certain he does not speak one word of it throughout the whole Chapter. Wherefore the Doctor ought at least to have proved, by comparing both these Texts, that he designed the same thing in them, which he has not once attempted; and yet this arbitrary supposal, is the foundation of his whole Comment upon this place.

2. His granting that the Natural man may assent to the truths of the Gospel, and his denying that he can discern their agreeableness to the Divine Perfections, and their fitness to promote the ends of the Gospel, is palpably absurd: For how is it possible that a man who exercises his rational faculties about divine things (which he grants the natural man may do) should believe the Revelations of the Gospel to be divine, and yet see no consistency in them with the Divine Attributes, and no suitableness in them to the ends of Gods Glory, and Mans Good? The Doctor, whatever he says about those improvements of the *natural mans* minde, which he allows to him, seems rather to take him for a *natural fool*, than a rational man. A great part of that evidence upon which we believe the Doctrine of Christ, is, that it is a Doctrine worthy of God, and a means conducing to the recovery of man; and if the literal sense of the Christian Doctrines themselves is not more evident to a man that can consider, than that they are so, why may not a considering man who believes the Doctrines, believe this of them?



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*fully shews* elsewhere, that this Light must be created in us by Almightyness; and he instanceth in 2 Cor. 4. 6. I shall in due place prove that St. Paul shews no such thing in that Text: But admit he did, yet it does not presently follow that St. Paul does in this place mean by the Natural man, one in whom this Light is not created; for 'tis certain he does not speak one word of it throughout the whole Chapter. Wherefore the Doctor ought at least to have proved, by comparing both these Texts, that he designed the same thing in them, which he has not once attempted; and yet this arbitrary supposal, is the foundation of his whole Comment upon this place.

2. His granting that the Natural man may assent to the truths of the Gospel, and his denying that he can discern their agreeableness to the Divine Perfections, and their fitness to promote the ends of the Gospel, is palpably absurd: For how is it possible that a man who exercises his rational faculties about divine things (which he grants the natural man may do) should believe the Revelations of the Gospel to be divine, and yet see no consistency in them with the Divine Attributes, and no suitableness in them to the ends of Gods Glory, and Mans Good? The Doctor, whatever he says about those improvements of the *natural mans* minde, which he allows to him, seems rather to take him for a *natural fool*, than a rational man. A great part of that evidence upon which we believe the Doctrine of Christ, is, that it is a Doctrine worthy of God, and a means conducive to the recovery of man; and if the literal sense of the Christian Doctrines themselves is not more evident to a man that can consider, than that they are so, why may not a considering man who believes the Doctrines, believe this of them?



them? Or how can he believe the former without believing the latter? I know not which way the Doctor can hope to escape, but by pretending it is possible for a man to assent to a Doctrine or Proposition, the true reason whereof he doth not discern; For example, that a man may assent to the Creed, upon the Authority of his Spiritual Guide, and not discern the true reasons of those Propositions which are contain'd in it. But this will not serve him; For the natural man is by him granted to be one who may have an *improved Reason*, and may exercise it in the consideration of divine things; and of such a man, *viz.* who is thus improved and considering, I say 'tis absurd to affirm, that he may assent to the revelations of the Gospel, and cannot discern that they are agreeable to the Divine Attributes, &c. The reason is, because this is to suppose him as dull and ignorant, as he was allowed to be knowing and rational before: Since 'tis plain that they are agreeable to the Divine Attributes, &c. As for those who believe the Christian Doctrine upon that meanest motive, of the Authority of their Teachers; though for want of considering, they do not *discern* its agreeableness to the divine Perfections, yet they do believe it; it being not only unreasonable, but impossible for a man to assent to any Proposition as a divine Revelation, which at the same time he believes to be inconsistent with the Perfections of God. But men that can tolerably well use their Understandings in Divine things, as the natural man may do (to abate the Philosophical Improvements which the Doctor is willing to cast into the bargain) may not only believe, but discern this Agreeableness; and it is nonsense to suppose they have exercised their Rational Faculties as they might have done in this matter;



matter; and withal to affirm that they assent to the truths of the Gospel, but cannot discern that they are consistent with the Divine Perfections. To put this out of question, I will instance in these Propositions of the Gospel, *That God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believed in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* This a natural man, according to the Doctor, may assent unto: But I demand; This Proposition being revealed, is it not very discernible, that God's giving his Son for Mankind is very agreeable with his *Goodness*? And that his purpose of saving Mankind by the Sacrifice of his Sons death, is agreeable with his *hatred of Sin* and his *Justice*? And that the demonstration of his Justice and Mercy this way is agreeable to his *Wisdom*? (2.) That no unrighteous person shall enter into the Kingdom of God: This also the Natural Man may assent to; But I demand, Is it not very discernible that this Doctrine is agreeable with the *Holiness* and *Righteousness* of God? Is it not discernably agreeable with his *Wisdom* and *Sovereignty*? And then why may not the wise and knowing man, that believes these Doctrines to be divine Revelations, discern them to be agreeable with the divine Perfections? Take the same Doctrines again, and I demand concerning them, Are they not manifestly suitable to promote the ends of the Gospel? These ends the Doctor saies are the *Glory of God, and our deliverance from a state of Sin and Misery.* As for the Glory of God, they plainly tend to the promoting thereof, because they manifest the Divine Wisdom, Goodness, and Holiness, and the Perfections of God, which was observed before: As for our deliverance from Sin; Is not that Doctrine plainly suited to that end, which assureth us there

is room for Repentance, since God hath given his only Son, &c. and which acquainteth us, there is no possibility of our entering into the, &c. if we are unrighteous? As for the *deliverance from misery*; Are not those Doctrines discernibly suited to that end, that are suited to deliver us from sin? And are not all these things so plain, that 'tis impossible for a man who hath an improved minde, and considers them as an understanding man may, not to discern them; much more, if he hath considered the *Propositions* themselves, so as to assent to the truth of them? What Agreeableness and Suitableness is it which this Doctor means? Is he able to explain it by such like instances as I have used? If he be, he shall see that we are able to discern it; if he be not, he *cants* like a Quaker, and pretends to know things, which he is not able to make sense of, when he comes to speak them. But may a Natural man understand and assent to the truth of the propositions of the Gospel? Yes, saith the Doctor, he may: For instance, he may assent unto this, *That Jesus Christ was crucified*: But now it is another Proposition of the Gospel, that to preach Christ crucified is to *Speak the Wisdom of God*, vers. 7. It is also another, that *The preaching of the cross, to them that are saved, is the power of God*, Chap. 1. vers. 18. Now if he may understand and assent to these Propositions, he may believe the conformity of the Doctrine concerning Christ crucified to the Divine Attributes, and its efficacy to bring men to Repentance and Salvation; which the Doctor saies *he cannot*, and thereby revokes his concession, *That the Doctrines of the Gospel are Propositions whose sense and importance any rational man may understand, and assent to their truth, and so be said to receive them.* Again, if the Doctor will take my  
word



word for it, I assure him that I do assent unto the Doctrines of the Gospel, *Under an apprehension of their conformity to the Wisdom and Holiness of God, and of their suitableness to the great ends, for which they are proposed as the means of accomplishing.* If a natural man can do this, then the Doctor is something mistaken to say, that he cannot; if he cannot, then I am no natural man according to his own Principles, and may I hope pretend to argue with him about Spiritual things.

3. He saith, That Spiritual things being foolishness unto the natural man, is a reason why he cannot receive them, taken from *the nature of the things themselves with respect unto the minde.* Now the nature of the things themselves is perpetually the same, but the Mindes of men may apprehend them otherwise than they

are, in their own nature; as when they apprehend them to be foolishness, which is the reason why they do not receive them; and this reason is not at all taken from the nature of

the things themselves, but from the Mindes mistaking the nature of these things, as he in effect confesseth, when he saith, that *in themselves they are the Wisdom of God.* But that which he means, as we may see by his instance of the Philosophers of old, is this, That the more wise and knowing any man is, the more unready he is to embrace the Mysteries of the Gospel. He saith expressly; *Any thing in Nature and Morality of any worth is embraced soonest by them that are wisest and know most; but here things fell out quite otherwise.* Well, suppose they did; yet the reason why the Philosophers rejected the Gospel, was not because they were wise and knowing men, but because they

*Thus St. Chrysostome upon the place. Hom. 4. Εἰρηται δὲ τὸ τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς τοῦ πράγματος οὐσίας, ἀλλὰ παρὰ τὴν ἐκείνων νόσον. This happens not through the nature of the thing, but their disease.*



they would not admit of Revelation, *as such*, nor yield that to be divinely revealed which was above the reach of mere natural reason ; and this was their great Pride and Folly.

Ἡ δὲ ἔχουσα σοφία ὁ μόνον ἢ ἐκ αἰδουσι, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐκ αἰσχυσι.  
The wisdom that is without did not only not instruct men [*in the Mysteries of the Gospel*] but also hinder them, *Chrysostr.* in loc.  
*Hom. 7.* But how is hindered them *St. Chrysostome* plainly tells us in these words, καὶ γὰρ καὶ αὐτοὶ τόπον πεπληρωμένοι εἰσιν.  
For these [*great men who rejected the Gospel*] were full of Pride,  
*Hom. 5.*

So the Pharisees rejected our Saviour, not because they were Learned and Knowing men ; but because their Lusts and Interests prejudiced them against his Doctrine, as he frequently told them : So that neither those nor these, opposed the Gospel, because it was unsuitable to the rational principles of their mindes, as

the Doctor would have us believe, but because it was unsuitable to their unreasonable prejudices and interests, which sure were none of those Principles. The Writings of *Justin Martyr*, *Clement Alexandrinus*, and divers others, may satisfy us, that the Gospel was early received by Learned Men and Philosophers ; what wise men they are that reject it, we may learn from the Doctor. *The principal Mysteries of the Gospel*, saith he, are by many looked upon and rejected as foolish, because false and untrue, though indeed they have no reason to think them false, but because they suppose them foolish. Now are not these excellent Philosophers, that reject a Doctrine as foolish, because 'tis false, and then have no other reason to think it false, but because they suppose it foolish ? Is not their rejecting the Gospel, an admirable instance whereby to demonstrate that the Doctrines thereof are foolishness in the nature of the things themselves with respect unto the minds of them that are wisest and know most ? If that which the Doctor here saies be true, then if it be necessary for a man to be a Christian, 'tis a very dangerous thing for him

him, to improve his minde by the exercise of his reason, since foolish and credulous persons are the most likely to give any entertainment to it; which was the very charge of *Celsus* and *Julian* against Christianity; and if they could have made good this charge, they and the Doctor here had done very well to expose it to scorn and contempt, as they and he have done, by representing it to be such a Religion, as the more a man exercises his reason about it, the further he is from believing it: For this is that which the Doctor means by saying, that the Mysteries of the Gospel are foolishness in the nature of the things themselves, with respect unto the minde: *viz.* that they are in their own nature such things, that the more wise and knowing a man is, the more likely he is to despise and scorn them; which whether it be not *Blasphemy*, I now leave the Reader to judge.

Here I cannot but remember what the Doctor premised in his Preface to the Readers, concerning the reasonableness of Christian Religion. *It is not, saith he, that I know of, denied by any, that Christian Religion is highly reasonable.* I suppose, he means by any Christian. But now, as he addes presently, *the Question is not what it is in it self, but what it is with relation to our Reason;* and then he tells us largely, 'tis reasonable to Reason enlightned, but foolishness, i. e. unreasonable to the natural man, whose Reason is unenlightned by the irresistible work; Say you so, Doctor? How comes it then about, *That it is not denied by any, that Christian Religion is highly reasonable?* Can they not deny it to be highly reasonable, and yet must they necessarily esteem it foolish and unreasonable? He saith also, *'Tis in vain to dispute with any about the reasonableness of Evangelical Faith*



*Faith and Obedience, until the state and condition of our Reason be agreed. Wherefore to speak plainly in the case, as we do acknowledge that Reason in its corrupted state is all that any man hath in that state, whereby to understand and judge of the sense and truth of revealed Doctrines, &c. so as to the Spiritual things themselves of the Gospel, in their own nature they are foolishness unto it. If the Doctor speaks plainly here, then (1.) according to him, it is in vain to dispute with any whose reason is corrupted, about the reasonableness of Evangelical Faith and Obedience. According to him also, every mans Reason is corrupted whose Minde is not renewed by the Holy Ghost, i. e. enlightned by an Almighty act of the Power of God; So that 'tis in vain to dispute with any such person about the Reasonableness of the Gospel, for the Spiritual things thereof will seem foolishness to him, do what he can, till the Holy Ghost renews him by his Almightyness. And thus the Doctor hath proved, that 'tis in vain for him or any man to go about to convince an Infidel of the reasonableness of the Gospel, for 'tis in vain to dispute it with him, till the state and condition of their reason be agreed on, i. e. till it be agreed to make renewed Reason the judge of the matter in question; but the Infidel hath none of that Reason, for all the reason he hath to judge of these matters by, is *corrupted reason*, as the Doctor himself contends, wherefore 'tis impossible for him to agree that their renewed Reason shall be the judge in this case; Wherefore 'tis in vain (one would think) to dispute with him at all. The only remedy in this case, is for the Infidel to make the Doctor's renewed Reason the judge between them; and when they are agreed upon that, they may fall to dispute, i. e. when the dispute is at an end; for if the*

Doctor's



Doctor's reason is to judge of the Reasonableness of the Gospel, the Infidel hath yielded the cause without any more ado. Thus the Doctor hath left no other way for a Christian to convince an Infidel, but this ridiculous one, of perswading the Infidel to let him be judge of the controversy between them; as if he should say, Here is like to be a dispute between you and me, whether the Gospel be the true Religion; now the Gospel is indeed the true and reasonable Religion, but this is only discernible by renewed Reason, such as mine is, and yours is not: Wherefore before we dispute, you must agree that my renewed Reason, that is, that I should be the judge of the Reasonableness of the Gospel; for till we are thus agreed *'tis in vain to dispute about the reasonableness of Evangelical Faith and Obedience.* I do not wonder that the Doctor falls foul upon the *Quakers* in his Book; for they and such sottish Enthusiasts as they are, seem to be the only men besides himself that claim the priviledge of this way of arguing: if the Doctor had it by himself without any Competitors (and his Fanatic cause needs it as much as theirs, though, thanks be to God, the Gospel needs it not) he would in a short time carry the world before him. (2.) 'Tis also, according to the Doctor, in vain to dispute with a man about the reasonableness of the Gospel, till he be convinced of it already: For, to say the truth, though the Infidel should make the Doctor judge in his own cause, he is yet never the nearer; for the Gospel will be foolishness to him, till he is himself enlightned by the irresistible work: Now when he is illuminated as the Doctor is, he shall believe and understand the Gospel to be a wise and reasonable dispensation, as the Doctor doth; but before he is so, 'tis in vain to dispute with him.

him. So that, for ought I can see, the regenerate men are e'en left to dispute it amongst themselves, that is, who need not dispute it at all, because they are already of one minde about it : And thus the Doctor hath proved all disputing whatsoever upon this matter to be vain and useless ; which makes me wonder why he hath troubled the world with his great railing Book, wherein he hath pretended to prove the wilde Opinions of his Party, to be Gospel-Mysteriēs : For if his Reader be enlightened, he is convinced of them already ; if he be not, his Arguments cannot enlighten him ; And therefore though the Doctor might pity him, yet methinks there is no reason why he should rail at him, because his Doctrines are foolishness unto him, since *such is the nature of them with respect unto our minds*, that 'tis impossible it should be otherwise.

4. Whereas he interprets those words, *He receiveth them not and he cannot know them*, by adding *spiritually* thereunto, he makes the Apostle to speak downright nonsense ; For he makes him to say, that the natural man cannot know the Mysteriēs of the Gospel spiritually, because they are spiritually discerned or known : for this is as much as to say, *that he cannot know them spiritually, because he cannot know them spiritually*, which I hope the Doctor will grant to be nonsense ; and this is a defect which runs through this whole Paraphrase which I have charged him withal ; the short of it being no more than this, The Natural man cannot understand the things of the Spirit of God, no, he cannot.

5. He doth in effect clear the natural man from all blame, for his not receiving the Doctrines of the Gospel : For he roundly tells us, that his impotency to discern them *is absolutely and naturally*



*rally insuperable.* What can be said more fully to prove that a beast is not to be blamed for not discerning these things, than that it is *absolutely and naturally* impossible that he should? But that which is still more absurd, is, that he doth not only ascribe his ignorance of these Spiritual matters to a *moral impotency* likewise, but he makes *Sec. 41.* the moral impotency to be greater than the natural: for though he had concluded this impotency of the Understanding to be absolutely insuperable, yet he saies, the Will and Affections are more corrupted than the Understanding, that is, more than most of all: For what greater corruption of the Understanding as to these things can be imagined, than that it is naturally impossible for it to understand and discern them? that is, unless I am turned into such a block as he speaks of, by reading his unintelligible Notions, that as to these things it quite ceaseth to be an understanding; and a beast may be as soon made to discern them as a man.

Now I freely grant, that there are some Opinions which the Doctor would perswade us are Gospel-Mysteries, to which this his Interpretation very well agrees; and if he had meant them only, I had not gone about to confute him here; for indeed I look upon them to be as he saith, *Unsuitable to the rational principles of the Minde,* unprofitable to man, and dishonourable to God; but then withal I cannot finde them any where in the Scripture, and therefore (whatever he fancies of a possibility to believe that to be divinely revealed, which is not believed to be consistent with the divine Attributes, &c.) I do not so much as believe them, nor do I see any likelihood that I ever shall, unless some irresistible Power makes another thing of me, than I finde my self to be



at present. And if this will content the Doctor, I have no quarrel with him: But then if he pretends, that the real Doctrines of our Saviour's Gospel, *viz.* That the Son of God was crucified for us, and that we must be saved by Faith in him, and that God will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him, &c. are as unintelligible, and the usefulness of them as indiscernible, as that of his new-fashion'd Principles; I must beg his pardon, if I cannot believe *that* neither, but reckon on the contrary, that the Doctor hath cast an horrible reproach upon the Christian Religion, while he makes it impossible for a man that bends his Minde to consider the Doctrines thereof never so attentively, and useth his reason never so modestly in the examination of them, to assent to them as Doctrines worthy of God and profitable to man. If that be true, then this pernicious Consequence is unavoidable, That it is to no purpose for a man to use any means to satisfy himself concerning the Truth of the Gospel; and if it be yet pretended to him, that he ought to be a right Believer, he hath no way but to sit down in a lazy expectation of that *Light* which the Doctor saies must be created in his Minde by an Almighty Act of God, before he can know and believe the Mysteries of the Gospel, as they are, and as they ought to be known. This is the consequence of the Doctor's interpretation of St. Paul's Text; and let any man but himself judge, whether it doth not infinitely disparage the whole Gospel of our Saviour, and whether it do's not offer great wrong to the Souls of men, by betraying them either into a contempt of Christianity, or at least into a sluggish neglect of all that *Consideration* whereby they come to understand and believe it upon its proper grounds.

And

And this is the reason, why I have been so punctual in finding out, and so long in confuting his Notions of this Text, which if they had not been altogether as pernicious as they are false, I should have left them to perish in their own Nonsense.

## SECT. V.

**T**He incoherence of his Interpretation with the scope of St. Paul in that and the former Chapter, must be judged of by observing what St. Paul's design is in them; which I now come to enquire into, and thereby to lay a foundation for the true Interpretation of the Text.

To allay those Contentions that were amongst the *Corinthians* about their Teachers whom they should follow, *Chap. 1. vers. 11.* St. Paul reminds them, how he had preached the Gospel amongst them, and by what arguments they had been won to receive it, *not with wisdom of words, vers. 17.* and again, *not with enticing words of man's wisdom, Chap. 2. vers. 4. but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power\**; i. e. not with Rhetorical

\*This Text our Author produces in another place, P. only to show his dislike of the sense thereof given in the Friendly Debate, as any one may see by the Impertinence of it to his design there; For

this is all he saies about it: Some of late have put in faint and weak exceptions against this latter clause (this Slanderer should have said, against his interpretation of this clause) viz. Demonstration of the Spirit, &c. as though not an evidence of the powerful presence of the Spirit of God, in the dispensation of the Gospel was intended therein, but the power of working Miracles, contrary to the whole scope of the place, and consent of the best Expositors. Now, unless the Doctor supposes that the Power of working Miracles was not an evidence of the powerful presence of the Spirit of God in the, &c. his exception is nonsense: But I leave it to the Doctor's second thoughts to consider, with what modesty he could call that Authors apprehensions of the Demonstration, &c. faint and weak exceptions, contrary to the whole scope of the place, and consent of best Expositors, after that excellent person hath vindicated them against his Adversary, by such clear and solid Reasons, and such pregnant Authorities, as neither he, nor any of his friends, nor the Doctor for them, have been able to say a wise word to. But what can that man want a forehead to say, who hath a face to pretend St. Chrysostome is for his turn in an interpretation of a place of Scripture, wherein he is clearly contradicted by St. Chrysostome in three or four Homilies together, out of one of which too he transcribes a passage in favour of his own sense, as he pretends? Now whether the Doctor be not guilty of this dishonesty, I shall leave the Reader, and him too, to judge by the following marginal Notes.



Orations, or Philosophical Discourses, such as the wise men among the Gentiles made use of, to put off their Opinions to the people withal, he did not go about to perswade them in this manner; but as it was fit to prove the truth of a divine Revelation, which the Gospel was pretended to be, he proved it to them by a divine Demonstration of the truth thereof, *viz.* that of Supernatural Gifts bestowed now upon Believers; of ancient Prophecies; of apparent Miracles wrought by Christ and his Apostles; and such Testimonies of Gods owning the Gospel to be a Revelation from him, as these are. The consequence whereof was, that *their Faith did not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God; i. e.* that their Faith was not grounded upon the Eloquence, or the subtle reasonings of men; but upon the plain Testimony of God, declared by Miracles, &c. And this was clearly a good consideration to take them off from contending about the persons of their Teachers, who never went about to make Profelytes to themselves, as *vers.* 13. by the ostentation of Learning and Eloquence; but to win them to the Christian Faith, by the demonstration of the Spirit, and of Power.

But hereupon the Apostle takes occasion to shew, (1.) The offence, which they who were most in vogue for wisdom, took at the Gospel, and the way of preaching it; and the prevalency of that way notwithstanding, above all other methods to make men wise and good; and this is the scope of *chap. 1.* from *vers.* 18. to the end. (2.) To vindicate this way of preaching the Gospel, against their pretences who rejected the Revelations of the Gospel, which is the designe of *chap. 2.*

That the former is the designe of the Apostles discourse in the first Chapter, is plain from what he



he saith *vers.* 18. and so forward. *For the preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness;* And who these were, we learn from *vers.* 20. *Where is the Wise? Where is the Scribe? &c. i.e.* Let those men who are offended at the Preaching of Christ crucified, come and compare the Religion they

teach, and the Reasons they bring for it, and the Good they do by it, with our Doctrine, and the Testimonies we confirm it withal, and the Advantages which it brings to them that believe it: *For it pleased God by the foolishness* (as they are pleased to call it) *of preaching to save them that believe,* *vers.* 21. *And the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness, &c.* *vers.* 25. i.e. Let it be consider'd, and you will see a clear manifestation of Divine Wisdom and Power in the Death and Resurrection of Christ, to the

convincing of men that his Doctrine is true, and the bringing of them to Salvation by it, *vers.* 24. You will see also what an infinite disparegement this wise contrivance of God will do to all the methods of human wisdom, when they are compared with it. *For God hath chosen the foolish things of this world,* those waies of instructing and saving Mankind, which are so far above all the inventions, and above the expectations of the wisest men, that they now generally reckon them to be foolish; *to confound the wise,* to put down all that wisdom of theirs which they so much

Τίς τῶν περὶ τὰς συλλογὰς μὲν ἐχούσων, καὶ τῶν τὰ Ἰουδαίων ἰδόντων ἰσχυρῶς, καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἰσχυρῶς, Chrys. in loc. Hom. 4. Who of those that are busied in Syllogismes, who of those that are skilled in the Jewish matters, have saved men, and made known the truth to them? Καὶ οὐκ ὅτι τῶν τυχόντων φραγμέναι, ἀλλὰ περὶ θεοῦ διαλεχθεὶς σωροὶς, καὶ τῆς βασιλείας πολιτείας, καὶ τῆς κατὰ ἀλήθειαν ὑποστάσεως, καὶ τῆς τῶν μακρόντων κρείσσεως, καὶ πάντας ἰπποῖσι φιλοσοφῶν, ὡς ἀπερίγραπτος, τὰς ἰδιότητας. Ibid. The Doctrine of the Cross being a discourse not about any ordinary mean things, but concerning God, and true Piety, and the Evangelical way of living, and the Judgment of the world to come, hath made all Believers Philosophers, even rusticks and private men themselves. Ἡ γὰρ διὰ τῶν ἰσχυρῶν καὶ τῶν σημείων ἀπεδείχθη, τῆς διὰ τῶν λόγων πολλῶς σπουδαιότερα. Hom. 6. For a demonstration by miraculous works and signs, is much more clear, and convincing, than that by Philosophical Arguments.

glory in, and thereby to shew that God is infinitely wiser than men, v. 27. *That no flesh should glory in his presence; vers. 29.*

Οὐ διὰ μαρίας ----- ἀλλὰ διὰ σοφίας  
τελειότερας, καὶ τοσαύτης, καὶ ἕτω μείζονος,  
ὥς ἐκείνην μαρίαν φαίνεται. Hom. 7. *Worldly wisdom was excelled not by foolishness, but by a more perfect wisdom, and that so much more perfect, that it seemed foolishness.* Ἀκούω ἰσχυρῶς ἐκταρασθῆναι ὁ χρεῖς, καὶ τὴν φιλανθρωπίαν ὁδῶς θαυμάζω; ἀκούει ἐκείνη καὶ ἀδύνηται νομίζει. Ibid. I hear that Christ was crucified, and thereupon I admire his love to mankind. He that calls this foolishness, when he hears it, thinks the death of Christ was an argument of his weakness, and inability to save himself. Ἕλληνες, ἀπαυτῶσιν ἡμᾶς ῥητορείαν λόγων καὶ δεινότητα σοφισμάτων. Hom. 4. The Greeks require of us Oratory and Philosophical Arguments. *And this is that which St. Chrysost. calls so often the ἔξωθιν σοφία, the wisdom that is without, which prejudiced the Philosophers against the Gospel.*

But the particular reasons, why so few of those persons whose wisdom was in this manner baffled, did embrace the Gospel of Christ (for not many wise men after the flesh are called, vers. 26.) we finde in vers. 22, 23. *For the Jews require a signe, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; But we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.* Here are two sorts of men, concerning whom the Apostle speaks, and he shews concerning each of them,

why they rejected the Gospel. 1. The Jews were offended at it, because it required the belief of a crucified *Messias*; but their pretence was that they wanted a Sign, *i.e.* some Prodigy from Heaven, or some such amazing appearances as accompanied the delivery of the Law to *Moses* upon mount *Sinai*. 2. The Greek Philosophers of those days were offended at the simplicity of the Apostles preaching, who nakedly represented their Doctrines, without any such Philosophical Subtleties and Reasonings, as they used themselves: For *that which they sought after*, which they pretended to want in the preaching of the Gospel, was *wisdom*, or demonstration from natural Principles; and therefore 'tis of these peculiarly said, that the Gospel was *foolishness* unto them; *viz.* because they looked for Wisdom or Discourses



Discourses merely Philosophical. Now it is plain that the Apostles chief designe in the second Chapter, is to vindicate his way of Preaching the Gospel, against the fault which the *Greeks* found with it. For to this purpose he begins directly

thus. *And I Brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God ; i. e. I answered not their expectation, who looked for Eloquence or Philosophy ; For I determined not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified.* v. 2. not to make known unto you any other Doctrines, but those which God had revealed, and particularly that the crucified *Jesus* was the Son\* of God. And my Speech and my Preaching was not with enticing words — but in demonstration of the Spirit, &c. *i. e.* and these Doctrines I proved by Miracles and other Divine Testimonies.

Now this way of proving them the Apostle justifies, from the nature of those things which he had preached unto them, shewing that they had depended altogether upon the free and Sovereign Will of God, and therefore could not be known but by Revelation, and therefore could not be proved to those unto whom they were not immediately revealed, otherwise than by sufficient testi-

Τὸ ποῖον, ὅτι ἐκείνη ἐκείνη, πρὸς  
ἀντιδιαστολὴν τῆς ἐξωθεν εἰρημίας, ἀλλὰ  
ἢ γὰρ ἄλθεν συλλογισμὸς πλῆθος, ἐπὶ  
σπαίγματα, ἀδ' ἀλλὰ πλῆθος ἀμύμητον  
ὅτι οὐ χρεῖς ἐκτελεσθῆναι. Hom. 6. For the  
Apostle said, I determined to know no  
thing, in direct opposition to the wife-  
dome that is without. I came not for-  
ming Syllogisms and Sophisms, nor  
saying any thing in that way to you,  
but only that Christ was crucified.  
Τὸ γὰρ μυστήριον κατασκευῆς ἐδῆται  
ἀλλ' ὅπως ἐστὶ τὸ τοῦ μόνου κατασκευασθέντος.  
For a Mystery a revealed Doctrine needs  
no Philosophical Argumentation, but  
'tis enough that it be barely declared  
what it is. Hom. 7. Πόθεν; ἐκ τῆς τῆς  
τῆς διὰ πλούτου, παραχρῆν πιστῆς  
κὶ γὰρ τὸ τοῦ ἀποδείξεως ἐκτελεσθέντος. τῆς γὰρ  
ἐπὶ μοι ὅρων τοῦ τοῦ ἀντισημειώματος ἐκ τῆς  
μοναρχίας ἐκτελεσθέντος ἐκ τῆς ἀντισημειώματος  
Hom. 6. What should give men assu-  
rance of the truth of these things, but the  
Demonstration of the Spirit? for this is a  
clear demonstration: for who, I pray,  
could see the dead raised, and evil Spi-  
rits cast out, and not receive these  
Doctrines that were confirmed by these  
works? That which the Apostles con-  
firmed their Preaching withal, were, τὰ  
σημεία καὶ αἱ ἐν τῇ παλαιᾷ γραφῇ μνη-  
στεύματα. Signs and Testimonies out of  
the old Scripture. Ibid.



mony, that God had revealed them to others; such as Miracles; and this was enough to shew why he rejected excellency of speech and wisdom, viz. because it was an improper way of proving things of that nature which he had delivered to them.

Thus saith the Apostle, *We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordain'd before the world unto our glory, v. 7.*

*i. e.* we declare those counsels of God concerning the Salvation of Mankind, which were concealed from former ages, and which God hath now ho-

noured us with the clear revelation of; *Which none of the Princes of the world knew; for had they----- But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, what things, &c.* vers. 8, 9. *i. e.* if it could have been found out by natural Sense or natural Reason that God would send his Son into the world, &c. the chief men among the *Jews* could not have been ignorant of it, and instead of crucifying him, they would have become his Disciples themselves.

*But God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit,* vers. 10. But these things, to the knowledge whereof no man by meer natural reason could attain,

Καὶ γὰρ ἂν θέλωμεν πρὸς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, πῶς ἀνθρώπος ἦν ὁ Θεός, καὶ εἰς μέγα ἐκείνους ἐκείνους, καὶ μὴ πρὸς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐκείνους, καὶ μὴ πρὸς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐκείνους. Hom. 4. For if we should go about to prove by natural reasons, how that God was made man, and entered into the Virgins womb, instead of leaving these revealed matters to faith, i. e. instead of proving them by testimonies of divine Revelation; they would laugh at us more than they do already.

Ταῦτο ὃ ἐποίησεν, ἡμεῖς τοῦτον ὁ Θεός, ἡμεῖς μετὰ ἡμῶν ἀκούσας τῶν μαθητῶν. καὶ γὰρ καὶ ἡμεῖς ὡς αὐτοὺς ποιούμεθα εἰς τὸ ταπεινῶσαι τοὺς αὐτοὺς εἶναι ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν τοῦ μαθητῆ, τὸ μαθητῆ τοῦ αὐτοῦ εἶπεν τὰ ἀποστόλοις. Hom. 7. This Honour has God done to us, that by our means others should hear his Mysteries. For to those whom we make our friends, we give this testimony of our friendship, that we communicate our secrets to them before to any else. Εἰ γὰρ οἱ ἀποστόλοις εἶπον, πῶς οὐκ ἔστιν ὡς ἡμεῖς, καὶ ἐπὶ καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου εἰσέλθῃ; καὶ αὐτοὶ, καὶ γὰρ πρὸς οὐκ ἔστιν ὡς ἡμεῖς, καὶ γὰρ πρὸς οὐκ ἔστιν ὡς ἡμεῖς, καὶ γὰρ πρὸς οὐκ ἔστιν ὡς ἡμεῖς. Ibid. If the Prophets spake of these things; why saith he, Ear hath not heard, nor have entered into the heart of man, &c? This is yet true, for he speaks concerning humane nature, — for they did not hear as men, but as Prophets; i. e. what they knew of these matters they knew by Revelation.

attain, God hath made known to us by revelation of his Spirit; so that this contrivance of Divine Wisdom is no longer hidden now, being revealed to us by the Spirit: *For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God; for the Spirit of God is acquainted with all the secret Counsels of God; and we may therefore be sure, that we are acquainted with as many of them, as the Spirit reveals unto us: For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God,* vers. 11. *i. e.* what man knows the secret purposes of another man, till he thinks fit to discover them himself? So the things of God, *i. e.* his Counsels concerning the Salvation of man, which depend meerly upon his own Will and Choice, none can know but the Spirit of God. And that these are the things which the Apostle means, is plain from the Argument which he useth here; for those things of a man which are common to humane nature, one man may know concerning another, without being acquainted by him what they are: In like manner, without particular Revelation, a man may understand the Natural Perfections of God, and those Divine Truths which by the meer use of Reason may be thence inferred; wherefore the things of God here meant, are those intentions and designs of God, which by natural reason cannot be inferred, from the consideration of the divine Perfections; because they depend only upon the Will and Pleasure of God, and are therefore only to be known by Revelation: And this is further expressed by the Apostle in the 12 vers. *We have received the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things which are freely given to us of God; to instruct men in the knowledge of those things,*



that could not otherwise be known. *Which things also we speak, not in the words which mans wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual; i. e.* there is then no reason why they should be offended, that we pretend not to prove these divine matters by Philosophical Arguments, but by such Arguments only as are proper to prove them by: The truth of our Revelation we prove by the demonstration of the Spirit and of Power, *vers. 4.* The sense of Revelation we prove by comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual; *i. e.* one divine Revelation with another, the Revelations of the Old Testament, with the Revelations of the New.

Ὅταν πνευματικὸν καὶ ἀποδείξω ὅτι ἀπὸ πνευματικῶν μαρτυρίας

ἀγορεύω. οὕτως ἀνίστη ὁ χεῖρς, ὅτι ἀπὸ παρόντων μαρτυρίας, καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος, καὶ ἀποδείξω, πῶς ἰσχυρὰ τὴν ἐν τῷ κτίσει διατρέβω. Hom. 7. When a Spiritual Doubt ariseth, we bring testimonies from Spiritual things; for instance, I say that Christ arose from the dead, that he was born of a Virgin: then I produce these testimonies, types, and demonstrations; *viz. Jonas his tarrying three days in the whale, &c.*

Then the Apostle addes, *But the natural man receiveth not, &c.* which is the Text to be explained. Now if we will allow the Apostle to speak consistently, we are [1.] By the *Natural man* to understand one who rejects Revelation, not excluding him that never had it offered to him. But

'Tis true that the word ψυχικός

doth not alwaies so signifie, for in St. Jude, *vers. 19.* the ψυχικοί are sensual men, men addicted to their Lusts, not those that reject Revelation, because they are there supposed to be Professors: and so the πνευματικοὶ are not those who are opposed to the πνευματικοὶ in 1 Cor. 2. who were taught by the Revelation of the Spirit; but to the πνευματικοὶ mentioned chap. 3. who were meek peaceable Christians. They therefore in St. Jude, were such as did not walk after the Spirit, wanted those Christian virtues of Love, Meekness, Peaceableness, which are the fruits of the Spirit. It is not unusual for the holy Writers, to use the same word under different significations; and then the sense they intend by such a word is to be determined by the Context. Now that ψυχικός in St. Jude signifies the sensual man, who though a Christian, was yet wanting in Christian temper and practice, is not more clear from the Context there, than that here it signifies one that is no Christian at all, or one that rejects the Revelations of the Gospel, is clear from the whole scope of the Apostle in this Chapter. Here it will not be unfit once for all to observe a like variety in the signification of the word πνευματικός used by the Apostle, Chap. 2, 3. Πνευματικός in the second Chapter is opposed to ψυχικός, and therefore signifies one that admits of Revelation, and is

the



thereby acquainted with the Will of God. And concerning him it is that the Apostle saith, *vers. 15.* ὁ δὲ πνευματικὸς ἀνακρίνει μὴ πνεῦμα, which the ψυχικὸς was not fit to do, because he rejected the only proper way, whereby the τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος were to be known. But in the third Chap. πνευματικὸς is opposed to σαρκικὸς, as when the Apostle saith, *vers. 1.* I could not speak unto you *ὡς πνευματικοῖς*, ἀλλ' ὡς σαρκικοῖς; now the σαρκικοὶ were ἡμιποὶ ἐν χρεῶσι, and consequently those who had received the Revelations of the Gospel, but by reason of their unchristian temper, being given to strife and debate, could not be said to be grown Christians, but were only babes in Christ, very imperfect Christians. Wherefore πνευματικὸς in opposition to them signifies, not only one who hath received and believed the Revelations of the Gospel, but whose minde also is thoroughly conformed to the Christian Doctrine, and so is the same with τελειός, Chap. 2. *vers. 26.* where the Apostle saith, σὺ εἶναι λαλᾷς μεν ἐν τοῖς τελείοις, &c. amongst those improved Christians, who were by their good temper qualified to receive higher knowledge concerning the Mysteries of the Gospel, which the σαρκικοὶ mentioned Chap. 3. were not able to bear. Thus St. Chrys. tells us, that the σαρκικοὶ were those who did ἐν τοῖς πνευματικοῖς τὸ ἡλατῶν κατέχον, &c. Hom. 8. who were of the lowest rank among the Spiritual; and this δι' ἐπιθυμίαν τῆς πορνείας, because of their evil lusts: and of these he saith, τὸ γινώσκειν σαρκικὰς καὶ αἰσχροὺς αἰσχύναι τὴν ὑψηλωτέραν, their carnality permitted them not to hear higher Doctrines. Moreover he saith, *Te cannot bear them*, is put for, *Te will not*; for, saith he, if it were a natural impossibility, ἵσως αἱ περὶ στήν, a man would pardon them perhaps; but since their inability is ἐκ προαιρέσεως, from their own choice, ἀπεσιγόνται τῆς ἀπολογίας, they are bereav'd of all excuse. And it was from their own choice, because it proceeded from their lusts; ὅτι βίβλος ἀκαθάρτης ἐμποδίζει δόγμασιν ὑψηλοῖς καὶ ἀρεῖς τὸ διορατικὴν φαῖναι τῆς διανοίας. For an impure life is an hinderance to sublime knowledge, &c. and as he excellently saith, Χρὶ πάντων καθαριύσεν τὴν ψυχὴν ἢ μέλλοντι θεωρεῖν τὴν ἀλήθειαν. He ought to purifie himself from all lust, who intends to pursue after truth; and to purge himself in particular from the lusts of Strife, and Contention, and Unpeaceableness; since as St. Chrysostome well observes, The Apostle could have told them they were carnal, because of their fornications, &c. but he chuseth to tell them they were so, because of their Schisms and Contentions; the lust whereof makes men as unmeet to labour after the knowledge of Truth, as any other impure affection whatsoever; which J. O. and his Brethren, as spiritual as they seem to themselves, would do well to consider a little better than I fear they do.

the former seems principally to be intended (though upon the matter it comes all to one) viz. he who rejects the testimonies whereby any thing is proved to be divinely revealed, which is above the reach of *Philosophical wisdom*. Thus did the *Greek Philosophers*, who counted the Doctrine of a crucified Saviour foolishness, as here the natural man doth the things of the Spirit of God; and it is he to whom the Apostle offers the *Demonstration of the Spirit and of Power*, against the excellency of speech and wisdom; wherefore the *Natural man* is he against whom St. Paul was proving

proving the necessity of Revelation, and the truth of revealed Doctrines by testimonies of Revelation; and consequently the Natural man is one who rejects revealed Doctrines. Though, as I intimated before, he may be so called that is fain to rely upon his meer natural Reason, for want of Revelation, because it was never proposed to him: For whether a man never had it, or rejects it being offered, he is equally forced to trust to natural Reason in his enquiry after divine Truths.

And therefore if the Doctor by *the state of Nature*, which he makes such a clutter about all over his Book, means the state of the Natural man here spoken of; the Scriptural notion thereof (though we do not finde this very phrase, *The state of Nature* in the Scripture) is this, *viz.* the state of an heathen man, who either wants or rejects divine Revelation. And thus it is fitly opposed to *a state of Grace*, as that signifies being a Believer, or a member of the Christian Church. And both are distinguish'd from the state of Judaism, or *being under the Law*. For the Jews did not reject all divine Revelation, believing that which came by *Moses*, and so were not in a meer state of Nature, as the Heathens were. But as many of the Jews as would not receive the Gospel were *under the Law*, but *not under Grace*, as the Apostle speaks, *Rom. 3. i. e.* they were not in *a state of Grace*; not as the phrase is taken now adays; but, as it signifies no other thing, than the receiving of the Christian Faith, which those Jews who received not, were *under the Law*; those Heathens who received not, were in a state of *nature*, or the *natural men* which the Apostle here speaks of.

2. By the things of God which the natural man rejects, the Apostle means, those Doctrines of



of Christianity, the truth whereof is not discoverable by natural Reason, which *neither eye hath seen, &c.* *vers. 9.* the hidden wisdom of God, *v. 7.* but are knowable only by Revelation [*God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit, vers. 10.*] being they concern the purposes of God that depended upon his Sovereign Will and Pleasure [even so the things of God, *&c.* *vers. 11, 12.*] and therefore are to be proved only by divine Testimonies and Arguments [by the demonstration, *&c.* *vers. 4.* in words which the Holy Ghost teacheth, *&c.* *vers. 13.*]

(3.) *Because they are foolishness unto him,* signifies because they are not proved by wisdom which the Greeks seek after, by Philosophical Demonstrations from Natural Principles, *chap. 1. vers. 22.*

[4.] By being *spiritually discerned* is meant, their being known, and understood, and judged of by the Revelation and Testimony of the Spirit, and that external to those who are not immediately inspir'd, as the Apostles were; which is clear from St. Paul's former discourse, for he proposes this way whereby to judge of the truth of the Gospel, *viz.* the demonstration of the Spirit and of Power; he also proposeth this way whereby to judge of the sense of the Doctrines thereof, *viz.* by comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual, that is, † one divine Revelation with another. Now this had

† It should have been remembered before, that although the Apostle had said before, that the Wisdom of God which he had Preached was hidden till God reveal'd it by Christ and his Apostles, yet this Wisdom had been foretold by the Prophets, and their Prophecies were Revelations.

of it. How then was it hidden? It was hidden in comparison to that revelation of it, which was made when those Prophecies were accomplish'd. The Prophecies of the Old Testament contained the Wisdom of God so as to cover it; but now when these Prophecies were fulfill'd, then the meaning of them was made plain. The completion gavelight to the Prophecy, when the Prophecy was made good by the completion. And when those Prophecies were clearly fulfilled, and the wisdom hid in them was now manifested, it was a very convincing method, which the Apostles took, to compare one divine Revelation with another, that of the Old Testament with that of the New, in order to the demonstrating of their true meaning by their agreeableness to one another. Thus St. Chrysostom clearly. *Τὰ γὰρ μυστήρια διαλάττω, καὶ διαγέγραπται ὡς ἐν σκιά ταῖς προφητείαις ἐνὰ ἑκάστην ταύτην περιγραφήν.* *Rom. 7.* The future things of the Gospel were by such resemblances, and descriptions, as it were shadowed out; that when they came to pass, they might be believed.

been



been utterly vain, if those to whom that evidence and this help was proposed could not possibly know spiritual things, without such an internal and immediate Revelation of them as the Apostles had themselves.

The Doctrines of the Gospel are revealed to the world, not immediately by the Spirit, but by the Apostles who had the Spirit of Christ, and have left us the Doctrines of Christ in their holy Writings. They proved that the Spirit of God had revealed those Doctrines, by the demonstration of the Spirit; they proved the Sense of them, by comparing one divine Revelation with another. And this way of Conviction St. Paul clearly opposeth to Philosophical Demonstrations; which it had been ridiculous to do, if he had not meant an external means of conviction by it, *i. e.* a means by which one man may convince another: which the Doctors irresistible Light cannot with any face be pretended to be; wherefore *to be spiritually discerned* doth, according to the clear scope of the Apostle, signifie to be discerned and understood by the external revelations and testimonies

of the Spirit. As things that are *naturally discerned* are things discernable by Sense, or meer natural Reason; so things that are *spiritually discerned* are those which be discernible only by the revelation of the Spirit, *i. e.* by the testimony of the Spirit, in the Miracles of Christ & his Apostles, as to the *truth* of them, and by comparing one divine Revelati-

on with another, as to the *meaning* of them. So that the Apostle's Argument is this: A Natural man cannot understand those things which are to be known

This is exactly according to St. Chrysost. Note upon the place, *Τὸ ἐστὶν, ὅτι πάντες δέονται τὰ λόγια, καὶ λόγοι αὐτὰ καταλαβεῖν καὶ ἐν. Hom. 7.* Because they are *spiritually discerned*, *i. e.* because the Doctrines preached by the Apostles must necessarily be received by Faith; and because they cannot be assented to from meer reasonings: or, because they cannot be proved by Philosophical discourses; if they be assented to at all, it must be upon the account of Divine Revelation.

known by revelation from the Spirit ; because they are spiritually discerned , *i. e.* because there is no way of knowing these things, but by Revelation and Testimony of the Spirit, which he rejects.

Now he whose Faith is grounded upon this Revelation, the Apostle calls a *Spiritual man*, *v. 15.* in opposition to the *Natural man*; and he saith concerning him, *that he judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man, i. e.* either, (according to St. Chrysostome's excellent Note) He judgeth both the Doctrines that may be known by meer natural Reason, and those which cannot be known but by Revelation: For he hath the Principles of Natural Reason, equally with the Natural Man, and moreover he hath further knowledge by Revelation, which the other hath not. Or, He judgeth all things of that nature, whereof the Apostle was speaking, *viz.* Gospel-Mysteries. He is able to prove the truth of these things, by proving that they are divinely revealed, and thereby to confute their pretences who reject them, because they cannot be known by meer natural Reason; but no man can confute him whose knowledge of these things is grounded upon sufficient evidence that they are divinely revealed. *For who bath known the minde of the Lord?* Who can pretend to know the minde of God better than God himself doth? and yet those must do so, who contradict what is proved by the demonstration of the Spirit; and therefore this is the certain foundation of our knowledge, which must stand when all the Wisdom of the wise men shall

Οὐτοι καὶ νῦν τὰ μὲν ἡμεῖς καὶ τὰ ᾧ ἀνέγνω πάντα ἴσμεν ἡμεῖς, τὰ δὲ ἡμῶν ἐκεῖνοι λογιζόμεθα. *Hom. 7.* We know both our own things, and all those of unbelievers; but they know not ours,

Τὰ ὅτι νῦν τῷ Χριστῷ ταῦτα ἡμεῖς ἴσμεν, καὶ ἀπεκάλυψεν ἡμεῖς, καὶ ἀπεκάλυψεν, *Hom. 7.* We know those things that are in the minde of Christ; *viz.* whatever it was his Will we should know, and which he hath revealed.

perish,



perish, *that we have the minde of Christ* ; that we are instructed by Christ himself, who came from God.

Thus have I largely shewn the designe of the Apostle in these two Chapters, and that sense of the Text in hand which makes the Apostles Discourse clearly consistent. And now I leave it to the unprejudiced Reader to judge whether the Doctor's interpretation of it, which I have already shewn to be absurd in it self, be not also utterly impertinent to the Apostles main designe ; for supposing the natural man to be one in whom spiritual Light is not created by an almighty work of God upon his minde, how strangely must the Apostle have wandered from his purpose, which was to shew that revealed Truths could onely be known by God's revealing them to us, and the truth of such Revelation by Miracles, Prophecies, and such Arguments as he opposed to those natural Demonstrations, and ways of proving things which the Philosophers used ? And how justly might they have derided the Apostle for finding fault with them, because they rejected revealed Religion, for its not being knowable by mere natural Reason ; if, after so long a flourish about an higher and better way of demonstrating those divine Truths he spake of, than from natural Principles, he had concluded that no man could understand their truth and sense, as they ought to be understood, till God made him to understand them by an irresistable work upon his minde, which is the Doctor's sense of those words, that they are *spiritually discerned* ?

I put it also to the Reader to judge whether this following Paraphrase upon these words, which the Doctor carps at, be as he calls it, *a wresting of the Scripture at pleasure*: "But such things as  
"these,



“these, (*matters of Divine Revelation*) they that  
 “are led onely by the Light of humane Reason,  
 “the learned Philosophers, &c. do absolutely de-  
 “spise, and so hearken not after the doctrine of  
 “the Gospel; for it seems folly to them, *Chap. 1.*  
 “*vers. 28.* nor can they by any study of their  
 “own come to the knowledge of them; for they  
 “are onely to be had by understanding the Pro-  
 “phesies of Scripture, and other such means  
 “which depend on divine Revelation, the Voice  
 “from Heaven, descent of the Holy Ghost, Mi-  
 “racles, &c. This is the Paraphrase of the Re-  
 verend Dr. *Hammond*, and it fully expresseth that  
 sense, which by the Context I have proved to be-  
 long to the Text. Our Author brings it in at  
 last to examine it by his own comment, which  
 since I have disproved, I might spare my self a-  
 ny further trouble in defending the sense of that  
 Paraphrase: But let us see what he hath to say  
 against it.

1. He saies that *the Apostle by the natural man*  
*intends not onely the learned Philosophers, but every*  
*one of what sort and condition soever, who hath not*  
*received the Spirit of Christ.* To see what a man  
 will say when he is set to wrangle! Dr. *Owen*  
 himself, more than once, gives his meaning of the  
 natural man in such expressions as these; *One*  
*which hath the use and exercise of all his rational*  
*faculties; the things of the Gospel were foolish-*  
*ness to the learned Philosophers of old, and the wise,*  
*knowing, and rational, made the longest opposition to*  
*them.* And he says himself in the very next ex-  
 ception, *The Apostle gives an account why so few*  
*wise and learned men receive the Gospel.* But if Dr.  
*Owen's* offence be taken that they onely, are in-  
 tended by Dr. *Hammond*, this offence is unrea-  
 sonably taken; for the Doctor intends, as his words  
 are

are very plain, *all those*, of whatsoever sort they be, *that are led onely by the light of humane Reason*, i. e. who either want or reject Revelation.

2. He dislikes the paraphrasing of *he receiveth not* by *he absolutely despiseth* the things of the Spirit; and yet this is sometimes his own Paraphrase, as where he gives the reason why the natural man doth not receive them, he says, *the Apostle tells them the Gospel is the foolishness of God; and that to cast a contempt upon the wisdom of men by whom it is despised*: And in divers other places he useth the same liberty. But his chief exception against this part of the Paraphrase is, because *it doth not express the reason given by the Apostle, why the natural man doth not receive, &c.* and that reason is his *disability to receive them*, i. e. because it doth not express that which the Apostle could not possibly intend; for he that barely says, that any one believes or receives not such a Doctrine, will not (unless he be a Fool) pretend that by saying so he gives a reason why he doth not. But Dr. Hammond gives a reason why the natural man receiveth not the things of God, where St. Paul gives a reason, who saith, he doth not receive them *because* they are foolishness unto him, and he cannot, because they are spiritually discerned.

His fifth Objection is to the same purpose with this; for he saith, the proper meaning of *receiveth not* is given in the ensuing reason and explanation of it, *he cannot know them*; which is nonsense: for not to know a Doctrine is one thing, and not to be able to know it is another; and therefore the latter cannot be the proper meaning of the former; nor do I understand how the *meaning* of a Proposition can be said to be given by the reason of it: for I always thought that the meaning of

a Sentence must first be understood, before the reason or truth of that meaning can be known. It were much to be wished, that though Dr. Owen takes no care to speak truth, he would yet make some conscience of speaking fence.

3. He says, *The Apostle treats not of what men could finde out by any study of their own; but of what they could not do; they could not receive the spiritual mysteries of the Gospel.* Which exception I am amazed at; because neither Dr. Hammond speaks of what they could finde out, but of what they could not finde out by any study of their own: but says J. O. *they could not do it, when the Gospel was proposed, declared, and preached to them;* and so the Doctor supposes too; and any man in his wits must suppose it likewise: for how else could they have called the Gospel foolishness, if it had never been known to them?

4. *The Gospel was preached to them by the testimonies of Prophecies, Miracles, and the like, in the same way and manner as it was to those that believed.* What then? why you may go look: for he has onely left us to guess at the designe of this exception: But at the end of his fifth exception, he says concerning the things of the Gospel being spiritually discerned; *To wrest this unto the outward means of revelation, which is directly designed to express the internal manner of the mindes reception of things revealed, is to wrest the Scripture at pleasure.* I answer, 1. If the word *spiritually* is designed to express not the means, but the manner of receiving Gospel-mysteries, then Dr. H. does wrest the Scripture by making it to signifie the outward means of discerning them, viz. Miracles, Prophecies, &c. But then withal, Dr. Owen wrests the Scripture too, by making it to signifie the inward means of discerning them, viz. the irre-



sible Light, by which he discerns them: for *inward* means of doing a thing, are opposed to the manner of doing it equally with *outward* means: And if Dr. *Owen* saith, that the internal manner of the mindes reception is expressed by his saying, that they are discerned by irresistible Light; I ask him why I may not say too, that the internal manner of the mindes reception of them is expressed by Dr. *Hammond's* affirming, that they are discerned by Miracles, Prophecies, &c. The true difference between Dr. *H.* and Dr. *O.* in this matter, is not whether the manner or the means of receiving spiritual things be signified by the word *spiritually*: but whether it is designed to express those means which Dr. *H.* affirms, *viz.* external Testimonies of divine Revelation, or those which Dr. *O.* contends for, *viz.* the internal and irresistible operations of the Spirit upon a mans minde. But 2. I have shewn by the clear scope of the Apostle, that the outward means are here to be understood. This I see is our Author's great trouble, that Dr. *H.* supposes the true cause why the Natural man cannot know the things of the Spirit, is because he will onely be led by his natural Reason, and will not attend to Revelation, and the outward means whereby revealed Doctrines may be proved: whereas Dr. *Owen's* meaning is, that he cannot receive them; because the New Light is not yet created in his minde by an almighty act of the Spirit. The truth of Dr. *Hammond's* sence, and the absurdity of Dr. *Owen's*, I have already shewn; and shall onely adde this to help our Authors understanding, *viz.* That the proposal of the external evidences of a divine Revelation made equally to those who rejected the Gospel, with them who received it, is no argument that they who re-

jected

jected it could not receive it, because their mindes were not enlightned by an omnipotent act of the Spirit: For another reason may be given why they could not, *viz.* the Apostles reason; because they sought after *mans Wisdom*, and would not admit of that for truth which was not proved by Philosophical discourse.

By the Authorities he brings to confirm his own exposition, and to confront Dr. *Hammond's*, we may guess how pertinent the rest are, that his Book is stuffed withal. He produceth that saying of St. *Chrysostome*; "A natural man is he who lives by the flesh, and hath not his minde yet enlightned by the Spirit, but only hath that connatural humane understanding, which the Creator of all things hath endued the mindes of men withal. This Exposition which he calls better than Dr. *Hammond's* is clearly to the same purpose with it: for here is not a word about that irresistible Light which *J. O.* contends for; and to be led only by the Light of humane Reason, which are Dr. *Hammond's* words, is perfectly the same with having only the connatural humane understanding, &c. The following passage of *Chrysostome*, which he quotes, is to the same effect. I shall only adde that citation out of the same Writer, which he brings in at the beginning of his Exposition: "The natural man is one that ascribes all to the reasonings of his own minde, and doth not think that he stands in need of aid from above; which is madness; for God hath given the Soul, that it should learn and receive what he bestows, or what is from him, and not suppose that it is sufficient to it self. Eyes are beautiful and profitable, but if they would see without light, this beauty and power will not profit but hurt them; and the Minde, if it would see without the Spirit of

“ God, it doth but entangle it self. This is clearly against him: For that which God is here said to bestow, is not that irresistible Light the Doctor speaks of; but the Light of Revelation, which I have been discoursing of, *i. e.* revealed truths, which St. Chrysostome saith the Soul is to learn; but to learn that Light he talks of, is nonsense: St. Chrysostome is so far from supposing, that it is impossible for a man to receive what [Revelations] God bestows, unless the Almighty Power of God necessitateth him to do it, that he saies God hath given the Soul *that it might receive them*, when they are bestowed: And he reckons it *madness* for a man to think he needs no divine Revelations, and consequently to reject them, when they are offered with sufficient evidence. Now the only reason, according to *J. O.* why he rejects them is, because the Almighty work hath not been yet upon his minde: If St. Chrysostome had thought so too, he had been a mad man himself for accusing them of Madness, that fail’d of doing, what no Power less than almighty could enable them to do; which is in effect to accuse them of Madness, because they were not Almighty themselves. St. Chrysostome’s Similitude is very pertinent: For as *Light* is to bodily Eyes, so is *Revelation* to the Minde in respect of revealed Truths; which are such, as none but the Spirit of God could discover: And therefore whoever refuseth to attend to his revelation of them, must needs be ignorant of them, and will finde himself entangled in many difficulties, which he might have understood by hearkning to Revelation. This Similitude St. Chrysostome useth elsewhere to the same purpose; for he saith, *As no man with his naked eyes can learn the appearances in the heavens, so the Soul alone cannot learn*



learn the things of the Spirit, i. e. they are not to be learned by meer Natural Reason, without the aid of Revelation.

οὐκ ἐστὶν ἡ ἀληθεύουσα ἐπιστήμη ἀπὸ τοῦ φυσικοῦ λόγου, ἀλλὰ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος. Hom. 7.

I now leave the Reader to judge with what conscience this man could pretend the Authority of St. Chrysostome, to countenance his own Exposition of this Text of St. Paul; and this is all I shall say to the Doctor's Authorites, which any one may see are as convincing as his Reasons.

And now at length, I desire him to take notice, that it will be to no purpose for him, to reject what I have to say concerning *spiritual things*, contrary to his notions of them, under pretence that I am a natural man: for I thank God I am a Christian; and so long as I have the Scriptures by me, I enjoy the means of understanding what Revelations God hath made known to us by his Son: For they contain those Doctrines, which were proved by the demonstration of the Spirit and of Power. These Doctrines are so far from being foolishness to me, or rejected by me, because they are not knowable by meer natural Reason; that I should be guilty of *inexcusable madness*, if I should not surrender up my belief unto them. Though I could not possibly finde them out, nor have known them, unless they had been revealed; yet being revealed, I discern the great Wisdom and Goodness of God towards us in them; still acknowledging that I know but in part, and that there is a depth of Wisdom in the Mysteries of the Gospel, which my understanding cannot reach.

\* But the truth of these Revelations I learn principally

ὁ ἀληθὺς λόγος τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος, ὁ ἀληθὺς λόγος τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος. Hom. 7.

\* Καὶ εἰδὼς τὸν δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ, ὅτι οὐκ ἐστὶν ἡ ἀληθεύουσα ἐπιστήμη ἀπὸ τοῦ φυσικοῦ λόγου, ἀλλὰ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος. Hom. 6.

1 Cor. And neither do we now persuade by Syllogisms; but, we prove what we say, from the divine Scriptures, and the Miracles wrought at first. And the Apostles persuaded not only by Signs, but discoursing also; i. e. they rea-

soned and argued from those Miracles they wrought: whereby it appears that the λόγοι and συλλογισμοί, which St. Chrysost. so often rejects, are not simply all Reasonings and Syllogisms, but such only as admit not of Revelation, as the ground of them: these being altogether improper, when revealed Doctrines are inquired into.

cipally from the testimonies given to them, and the sence of them (not excluding other subordinate helps) by comparing one Divine Revelation with another: and the Doctor hath no other means, to qualifie him, for the discerning of these things aright, but that *new light* which he pretends to, but which the Apostle speaks never a word of, and let him make his best advantage of it.

But if the Doctor be resolved to Cant on still in his own defence, and call this Exposition of *St. Paul's Text*, which I have offered, *carnal Reasoning*, and the *Wisdom of the Flesh*, (and perhaps he will finde little else to say against it) there will be small hope left of doing any good upon him; nor is any thing to be done with him, but to turn him over to the *Quakers*, and with them at present I leave him.

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PART.

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## PART I.

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An Account of what we are taught  
in the Holy Scriptures concern-  
ing the Operations of the Ho-  
ly Spirit.

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### CHAP. I.

*The General Subject of the following Dis-  
course stated.*

#### § I.

**T**Hrough the Assistance of that *Holy Spi-  
rit*, whose *Operations* I intend to treat  
of, I shall endeavour the performance of  
these two things.

First, to lay down as clearly and methodical-  
ly as I can, what I finde the Holy Scriptures have  
taught us concerning his *Operations*; and as I go  
along, to remove those *erroneous*, and, as I am yet  
perswaded, *dangerous* Opinions of Dr. Owen and  
his Brethren concerning this matter, which may  
seem needful to be debated in order to the pre-  
sent clearing of the Truth; and this shall be the  
work of the *First Part*.

Secondly, to confute some other pernicious Do-  
ctrines of his, relating to the same subject; the  
consideration whereof may be fitly enough refer-



ved till we have concluded what the Holy Scriptures affirm in this matter; and that will be my designe in the *Second Part* of this Discourse.

I shall begin the First part with stating the general Subject of my intended Discourse as plainly as I can.

Amongst other significations of the word *Spirit* that may be met with in the Scripture, it will be sufficient for my present designe, to take notice of these that follow.

1. It is sometimes used to signifie the *Minde* of man, as in *Joh. 4. 24.* to worship God in *Spirit*, is to worship him with our Souls: and in *Gal. 6. 18.* and *Col. 2. 5.* and in divers other places. This is so plain, that it needs onely to be mentioned; for where the word is used in that sense, the Context does easily lead a man to the right understanding of it.

2. It sometimes signifies the Temper and Disposition of a man's minde. Thus we are to understand that *spirit of Faith* mentioned by St. Paul *2 Cor. 4. 13.* which the Christians and God's Servants also in former times had, viz. the same pious temper of Minde, in bearing Afflictions for Gods sake, and looking for deliverance and reward from him. So likewise, *God hath not given us the spirit of Fear, but of Power, of Love, &c. 2 Tim. 1. 7.* contrary to that timorous cowardly temper of being afraid to endure Persecution for Righteousness sake. Hereby, saith St. John, we know that we dwell in him, and he in us; because he hath given us of his Spirit. And what that spirit is, we see plainly by the former words, *Chap. 4. vers.*

vers. 12. *If we love one another, God dwelleth in us.* It is that spirit of Love, that Benignity and charitableness of minde whereby we become like unto God.

3. By the Spirit, we are frequently to understand *the Holy Spirit* of God, the third person in the blessed Trinity, as in 1 *Joh.* 3. 7. *There are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, or Spirit.* So also when St. Paul saith, *There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit,* 1 *Cor.* 12. 4. we are by Spirit to understand the *Holy Ghost*; for vers. 6. he saith *it is the same God which worketh all in all*; which compared with vers. 11. *But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will,* makes it plain, that by the Spirit here St. Paul understands God the *Holy Ghost*. This is the sence wherein I understand the word *Spirit*, when I speak of the operations of the Holy Spirit in us; I mean the *person* of the Holy Ghost. But we must observe,

4. That *the Holy Spirit* is frequently used to signifie his *Operations*, or those *Effects* which are wrought by his Operations. Thus *the pouring out of the Spirit*, mentioned *Acts* 2. plainly signifies his bestowing supernatural gifts in great measures upon the Apostles and Disciples of Christ. So, *Received ye the Spirit*, i. e. the gifts of the Spirit, *by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?* Gal. 3. 2. Thus also are we to understand that promise made to the Apostles of *sending the Holy Ghost*, Joh. 14. 26. For this being *the promise of the Father*, mentioned *Acts* 1. 4. which was foretold in these words, *I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh*, *Acts* 2. 16, 17. must needs signifie the

P. 87.

the same thing with *pouring out of the Spirit*; which phrase, as Dr. Owen truly notes, *bath respect unto his Gifts and Graces*. So likewise the phrase of *giving the Spirit*, Luke 11. 13. is explained in *Matth.* by *giving good things*, i. e. such good things as the Spirit of God is the Author of to Believers. Indeed nothing can properly be said to be given to us, but what is capable of becoming our own; therefore when the Holy Spirit is said to be given, some spiritual good or benefit is meant, which accrues to us by the Operation of the Holy Spirit. But the Doctor tells us, that *where the Spirit is given, he is given absolutely, and as to himself not more or less; but his Gifts and Graces may be more plentifully and abundantly given, at one time than at another, to some persons than to others*. So that he makes two different things, of *having the Spirit of God given to us*, and *our being partakers of his Gifts and Graces*: for according to him, a man may have these limitedly; That he must have absolutely: These more or less; That not so. And this is a mystery which he hath found out in that expression of *giving the Spirit*. Whatever he intends by this conceit, it is plainly contrary to the use of that Phrase in the Scripture; for *John 3. 34.* it is said of our Saviour, that *God gave not the Spirit by measure unto him*; from whence it is evident that the Spirit may be given in measure: Wherefore this Phrase doth not necessarily imply, that the person of the Spirit is properly given, as the Doctor pretends: for he confesseth, that *as to himself he is not given more or less*. Nay, those words of St. John Baptist imply that the Spirit was given to all other Prophets and Righteous men in measure; and consequently the giving of the Spirit unto men, cannot signify the giving of his Person,

Ibid.

P. 80.

or



or the giving of him *absolutely neither more nor less*; for he is alwaies given to them in measure, i. e. in the same measure wherein his Gifts and Graces are communicated to them.

The same thing is otherwise exprest, *Matth. 12. 18. I will put my Spirit upon him*; which being spoken concerning our Saviour Christ, is parallel to Gods *giving the Spirit to him*, mentioned *John 3. 34.* Indeed there is little difference in the expressions, if it be observed that the passage in *St Matthew* is cited out of *Isai. 42. 1.* where the words are *נָתַתִּי רוּחִי עָלָיו* I have given my Spirit upon him; which is almost the same expression with *ἐδώκεν τὸ πνεῦμα ἐν αὐτῷ* in *St. John*; only *עָלָיו* upon Him, makes the former to allude to the Descent of that visible Glory upon our Saviour, when he was consecrated to his Office by the Holy Ghost. But the Doctor hath met with an unexpected Secret in the Phrase of *putting on*; for he doth not only pretend that it is the person of the Spirit, which God is said to *put upon* men, but he thinks something more is meant by it, than by Giving the Spirit. He saith, God doth *P. 85.*  
*not only give and send his Spirit unto them, to whom he designs so great a benefit and privilege, but he actually collates and bestows him upon them. He doth not send him unto them, and leave it in their wills and power, whether they will receive him or no; but he so effectually collates and puts him in them, or upon them, as that they shall be actually made partakers of him. And again, As to some Gifts P. 86.*  
*and Graces, God doth bestow his Spirit where there is some preparation and cooperation on our part; but wherever he designs to put or place him, he doth it effectually. This is too serious a subject to be pleasant withal, otherwise, here would be occasion enough,*

P. 15.

enough. The Doctor it seems hath discovered, that the person of the Spirit is bestowed upon those that are converted, and that their Conversion is by an *irresistible* work; and all this in the Phrase of *putting the Spirit upon* a man, or *in* him. Now what a goodly Argument is here lost, if this Phrase should signifie the same thing with that of *giving the Spirit*! as I have shewn that it doth; unless our Authour is subtle enough, to shew some real difference between the meaning of these Phrases in *Matth. 12. 18.* and *John 3. 34.* where they are used concerning *Christ*. But perhaps the force of his Argument lies in the only word *Put*, and therefore he produces that Text, *Isai. 63. 11.* where indeed the Verb שם is made use of, which properly signifies *to Put*. The words are, *Where is he שם that put his Holy Spirit in the midst of them? i. e. whose Spirit was present with the Israelites, to save them from their enemies: For the Context plainly shews this to be the meaning, Where is he that brought them up, out of the Sea? where is he that put, &c. that led them by the right hand of Moses, &c? vers. 12.* Now certainly this work of the Spirit, in saving the *Israelites* from the *Ægyptians*, doth not imply that the very person of the Spirit was put upon them; and without all question, 'tis of a very forreign nature from that work, for which, as he pretends to prove from this place, the Spirit is irresistibly *put upon* men. And therefore this Text is every way impertinent to his purpose.

To conclude; The Reason of these and the like expressions, may be easily understood, by comparing them with that plain Text of *St Paul*, *1 Cor. 12. 4.* *There are diversities of Gifts, but the same Spirit; for to one is given by the Spirit, the*  
word

*word of wisdom, to another, &c. All these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every one severally as he will, vers. 11. For because it is the person of the Holy Spirit that bestowed these several gifts, therefore by an usual Metonymy, they who received these gifts were said to receive the Holy Spirit, 1 Cor. 2. 12. And in like manner the Spirit of God is said to be given, and sent, and poured forth, and administred, and put upon those in whom his Operations are, and upon whom his Blessings and Benefits, his Gifts and Graces are bestowed. These are <sup>other</sup> significations of this word Spirit in the Holy Scriptures, which I have not noted, as being too far-  
rain to my present purpose of stating the subject of this Discourse, to which I now proceed.*

## SECT. 2.

First of all, by the *Operations of the Holy Ghost*, I understand those, which the *Minde of man* is the object of; and therefore I do not intend to say any thing of the work of the Spirit, in the *creation of Man*, in the forming of his *Body* and his *Soul*, and in enduing him with *Intellectual* and *Moral Abilities*; much less in the *Creation of the World*, the *Heavens* and the *Earth*, &c. which Dr. Owen hath taken great pains about. But I cannot think this needful to the designe which I have, of discoursing about the *Actions and Operations of the Holy Spirit upon our mindes*; for they are hereby supposed to have been created, and to be what they are. Thus the first signification of the word *Spirit* is proper to the object, about which *those Operations of the Holy Ghost that I mean are conversant.*

Chap. 4. B. 1.

Second-



Secondly, I *intend* those Actions of the Holy Ghost upon our mindes, which are proper to cause certain *Qualities* in them, whereof they are capable subjects; for instance, such as are contained under the second signification of the word *Spirit*, viz. *Faith*, and *Charity*, and *Meekness*, and the like. But I do not mean, nor is it requisite for me to say any thing of the Operation of the *Spirit*, whereby our mindes or any other created beings, are sustained in their Natures; especially, because the Doctor hath taken care not to omit that *Subject*.

ibid.

Thirdly, I mean those Operations of the Holy Spirit onely, the promise whereof is contained in the Gospel of our Saviour; by which limitation of the Subject, you see I am not like to trouble you with any enquiry concerning the Operations of the Spirit upon the minde of Man before the *Fall*: for the promise of *the Holy Spirit* in the Gospel is made to *Falln* creatures; and what his Operations upon our mindes are since the *Fall*, cannot be known but by Revelation; because it depended altogether upon God's free Will and Pleasure to bestow the *Spirit* upon us. Neither shall I discourse of the nature and degrees of the *Spirit of Prophecy*, as it was communicated before the coming of the *Messias*: nor shall I at present examine our Author's learning in that point; because I intend to confine my self to those promises of *the Spirit* which may be met withal in the Gospel. For the same reason I shall altogether omit to take notice how by the Operations of the Spirit men grow skilful *Politicians*; in which matter if any one hath a minde to be informed, he may consult *Dr. Owen*. Nor lastly do I think my self concerned to say any thing

Ch. 1. B. 2.

P. 116, 117.

thing of the work of the Holy Spirit, *in and upon the humane nature of Christ*; which the Doctor hath likewise spent above a long Chapter upon: ch. 34. B. 2. for that is not the work of the Spirit upon our mindes which *Christ* hath promised to us, and which we can have no other knowledge of than by his Word, *i. e.* by what he hath been pleased to declare concerning it by himself and his Apostles.

Lastly, I mean *those Operations* of the Holy Spirit upon our mindes, the *continuance* whereof is promised to the Church in *all Ages*; removing those from the matter of our enquiry, which were peculiar to the *first*; *i. e.* such as shewed themselves in the extraordinary and miraculous Gifts of the Apostles, and the Believers of that time, who were to confirm and establish the Christian Doctrine in the world, by *the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power*; by supernatural effects evident to sense, and such testimonies of divine Revelation. When the Doctrine of the Gospel was once fully demonstrated to be divinely revealed, there was no need that God should appear in every Age to own it by *new* testimonies of Revelation; because the knowledge of *those* that were given thereunto *at first*, is conveyed down to us with sufficient evidence that they were *then* given. Now Miracles and such extraordinary works of the Spirit are ceas'd: But the Scriptures mention such a Promise of the *Spirit*, which will never be out-dated while the ministration of the Gospel lasts; and this is one of those promises made in the Gospel, which argue the constant *bounty* and *affection* of our Heavenly Father towards us. Now they are *these Operations* of the Spirit, *viz.* which are continued through all ages of the Church,



Church, to which I shall confine my thoughts in the following discourse. But before I proceed, it may not be amiss to make this plain Inference, that since *these Operations* of the Spirit differ clearly in their *nature* and *end* from *those* which were peculiar onely to the first ages of the Church; therefore those places of the Holy Scripture, which onely concern the work of the Holy Spirit in gifts *extraordinary* and miraculous, are not to be produced for the proof of any opinion concerning his *ordinary* and *constant* Operations. And whatsoever is affirmed concerning those, must not presently be affirmed of these, unless it can be shewn by some clear Text, or other good Reason, that what is so affirmed is common to them both. And therefore to be sure, some care must be had, not to mistake those places of Scripture, which speak of the extraordinary gifts of some Believers, for Texts which mention those Operations and Graces that are common to all. But as obvious as the difference between these things is, I finde Dr. Owen frequently confounding them, as if there were no difference to be put between them. Thus after he had recited those promises of our Saviour, made to his Disciples; *The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatever I have said unto you. I have many things to say unto you; but you cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he shall shew you things to come. He supposeth that these are instances of that general promise of the Spirit, which belongs unto all Believers unto the end of the world; than which nothing can be more*



more apparently false, as is plain from our Saviours words themselves; *He shall bring to your remembrance whatever I have said unto you, &c.* and *he shall shew you things to come*; which and the like expressions no sober man can apply to Believers now. And this the Doctor himself is so sensible of, that he tells us in the same breath, *The Holy Ghost was bestowed on the Primitive Christians in a peculiar manner, and for especial ends.* Now I would gladly know of him what other ends besides those that were peculiar to the state of the Primitive Church, are mentioned in the foresaid promise of the Holy Ghost.

Many instances of this nature might be produced against him, were it not for wasting of time: I shall onely give the Reader a *Specimen* how he argues from those Texts which speak of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit.

He tells us, that in some the Spirit works *Con-* P. 168.  
*vicition and Illumination*, without intending to work *saving Grace* in them; which therefore shall never be effected; and that the reason why some Believers are not so good as others, is *because the Spirit carrieth on the work to a great inequality.* And this Doctrine he makes a shift to countenance, by saying, that the Spirit worketh in all these things, according to his own will, aiming at that place of the Apostle to the Corinthians, where he saith, *The Spirit worketh all these things, dividing to every man severally as he will.* Now I think we have as good as his own confession presently after, that this place belongeth to another Matter, viz. the distribution of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit. For thus he saith, *And this is that which the Apostle mindes the Corinthians of, to take away all*  
 F *emulation*

*emulation and envy about spiritual Gifts, that every one should orderly make use of what he had received to the profit and edification of others.* Now either the Doctor alleadged this place to no purpose, or he must be supposed to argue in this manner. Because the Spirit distributed extraordinary gifts for the edification of the Church, *according to his own will*; therefore it is sometimes the will of the Spirit to *enlighten and convince* those men in whom he *intends not to work saving Grace*. That the Spirit of God worketh always according to his own will and wisdom, there is no question; but we may well question, whether in bestowing that Grace which is necessary to the salvation of every Believer, he worketh in the same manner and method as he did in conferring extraordinary gifts, that were none of them necessary to the salvation of those particular persons on whom they were bestowed; and therefore that the Spirit of God in the distribution of these, worked *according to his own will*, can be no proof of the affirmative. And the Doctor might have observed the inconvenience of referring to this Text in favour of his opinion, from what he himself concludes. *So that it is an unreasonable thing for any to contend about them*, i. e. about those spiritual Gifts: For if what is affirmed truly of the distribution of them be true, also of *all* the effects of the Holy Spirit upon the mindes of men; it is also an unreasonable thing to *contend about any of them*, i. e. it is as unreasonable for the Doctor to reprove any man because he is not converted, or because he hath no more Grace than he has, as it would have been for him that could speak with Tongues to finde fault with his Christian Brother, to whom that gift was not imparted.

Again,



Again, it is plain enough that the *promise* of the Father, concerning the Spirit which the Apostles were to wait for, *Acts* 1. 4. and the power which they received after the Holy Ghost came upon them, that they might be *Witnesses*, &c. and the promise of the Holy Ghost which Christ received from the Father, *Acts* 2. 23. peculiarly concerned the miraculous Gifts which were bestowed after Christ's Ascension; and this, as I conceive, the Doctor acknowledgeth, by saying that Christ shed forth what they saw and heard in the miraculous operations and effects of it. Now saith he, In this promise, viz. *Acts* 1. vers. 4, 8. the Lord Christ founded the Church it self, and by it he builded it up. And this is the Hinge whereon the whole weight of it doth turn and depend unto this day. It is indeed certain that the faith of the Church is at this day founded upon the extraordinary testimonies that were given to the Gospel by the Spirit in the first ages of the Church. But that which follows is absolutely false: Take away this promise, suppose it to cease as unto a continual Accomplishment, and there will be an absolute end of the Church of Christ in this world. For (as he elsewhere confesses himself) Miracles are ceased, and yet there is a Church. He proceeds thus: No Dispensation of the Spirit, no Church; he that would utterly separate the Spirit from the Word, had as good burn his Bible. Be not so hasty; for although this happens to be a truth, yet 'tis more than you have proved. The Operations of the Spirit may now be utterly separated from the Word, for all *Acts* 1. 4. And although you very truly tell us, that the bare Letter of the New Testament, cannot ingenerate Faith and Obedience in the hearts of men; yet for any thing you have here said, it may: For those Texts upon which you ground your confidence, speak one-  
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ly of the miraculous Gifts whereby the Gospel was confirmed. Now these being recorded in the New Testament, together with that Doctrine which was proved by them, may be as able to assure men of the truth of the Gospel, and make them obedient to the Law of *Christ*, as they were when they were seen and heard; and that *of themselves* too, for any thing you have shewn to the contrary from *Acts* 1. though the contrary may well be shewn from other Scriptures.

Now I cannot see to what end *these men*, when they are speaking of the Promise of the Spirit, which will in *all ages* be accomplished, should say so often as they do to those Texts, which mention those extraordinary gifts of the Spirit that were bestowed in the *first*; unless it be to make their followers believe that the true Ministers of the Gospel are inspired as the Apostles were; and that they preach in *the demonstration of the Spirit, and of Power*, as the Apostles did: Which because we do not pretend to, it is left to them who do so, to be sole owners of the Privilege: Just as the *Papists* support their pretence to Miracles and Infallibility, by drawing the promises peculiarly made to the Apostles and first Believers, into consequence for the Church of *Rome* in every age. And I fear by the like device, our Author hath laid his Plot to unchurch us quite and clean, who conform to the *Laws*. For, saith he, *Let men cast themselves into what order they please, institute what forms of Government and religious Worship they please, let them do it by an attendance according to the best of their Understandings unto the Letter of the Scripture, i. e. let their Government and Worship be as neer the rule of the Scripture as they can*

can possibly frame it; yet if the work of the Spirit of God be disowned or disclaimed by them, if they disown those extravagant pretences to the Spirit which you set up, to magnifie your selves withal; If there be not in them, and upon them, such a work of his as is promised by our Lord Jesus Christ, there is no Church-state amongst them; nor as such is it to be owned and esteemed. And is this that you have been driving at all this while? you have now found out a new colour for your Schism; and it seems the separation from the Church of England must go forward upon this pretence, that the work of the Spirit promised by our Lord Jesus Christ is not in us and upon us; which in many places of your Book, also, you spare not to say we reproach and disavow. But I beseech you, dare you say that you have that work of the Spirit in you and upon you, which is signified by the fore-mentioned Texts? If you say so, we shall presently desire you to convince us of it by Miracles, and such signes as the Apostles did. If you dare not say it, then it seems that work of the Spirit is no more in you and upon you than 'tis in us; and then I hope we are not *unchurched*, for not pretending to it, nor fit to be accounted *Reprobates*, because we are not *Liars*. I acknowledge that promise of our Saviour mentioned by you in your next Section, Matth. 28. 20. *I am with you always even unto the end of the world*, proves the constant presence of Christ in his Church, by his Spirit; but then Sir it doth not prove, nor, I think, are you able to prove, that the fore-mentioned promise made to the Apostles, is the same promise with that which is here made. Now as to that work of the Spirit, which will indeed continue through all ages of the Church, God forbid that we should *disown* and *disclaim* it. But

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~~we discern~~ the proving it, from such places of Scripture as you lay the great stress of your proof upon, lest we should seem to pretend to those influences of the Holy Spirit, which were *poured forth* upon the Church at her first appearance in the world, to confirm the Christian Faith by signes and wonders; and not being able to make good our pretence, be laughed at for our pains. It would not avail us to say that we pretend not to those measures of the Spirit, *those extraordinary* Gifts which the Apostles and first Believers had: for it would be unanswerably returned upon us, that these Texts cannot be proved to speak of any but these; and thus we should disparage a good cause, by arguing no better for it. Therefore, Doctor, if *the whole work of the Spirit in and towards the Church it self, be openly derided*, as you complain; you may, I doubt, in great part thank your self, and such as you, who by imprudent Discourses upon this subject, have given profane persons occasion to make a question whether now-a-days there be any work at all of Gods Spirit upon the hearts of men. I shall now endeavour to shew that there is, and *that* by laying together what the Holy Scriptures say concerning it: All which I suppose may be reduced to these three heads.

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1. What those effects are for the producing of which in the mindes of men, God will give the Holy Spirit in all ages of the Church.

2. To whom this promise of the Holy Spirit is made.

3. What is the manner and measure of his Operations.

By



By shewing what we are taught in the Scriptures concerning these things, I hope the Reader who hath not so well considered them, may gain a profitable knowledge of this part of Christian Doctrine. And that is a profitable knowledge of it, which will incite him to the study of Godliness and Virtue. For this promise is made to encourage men to be good; and the principal end which I aim at in this undertaking, is to make it appear what great reason they have to endeavour earnestly after true goodness, since God hath promised to give his *Holy Spirit*.

## CHAP. II.

*Concerning those effects, for the producing of which the Holy Spirit is given to Believers.*

## SECT. I.

**D**OCTOR O. saith well, that when we treat of the Operations of the Holy Spirit, *we are exercised in such a Subject, as whercin we have no rule nor guide, nor any thing to give us assistance, but pure Revelation.* For I suppose he means by these words, that all our knowledge concerning *this* matter depends upon Revelation: For the promise of *the Spirit* is a branch of the New Covenant, which depended upon the pleasure of God; therefore our knowledge of this part of the Covenant must be grounded upon the Scriptures, which contain the revelation of it. And by God's assistance I shall endeavour to govern my self by that rule, while I am debating those Questions I have propounded concerning the Operations of *the Holy Spirit*:

The first whereof is this, *What those effects are for the producing of which the Holy Spirit is given to men.* And this I the rather begin withal, because the end of his Operations, being well understood, we shall be the better able to judge of the meaning of those Texts which tell us who they are to *whom* the Spirit is promised, and what is the *manner* of his Operations.

What

What the effects themselves are, for which *the Spirit* is given, may be known, 1. In great part from that promise of *the Holy Spirit*, which our Saviour made to his Disciples, *Luke* 11. 13. 2. They may be fully known from those other places of Scripture which mention the several Graces of the Holy Spirit.

I begin with the promise in *St. Luke*; whereby we may understand for what purposes the Holy Spirit is promised to those that believe in *Christ*. The Text is this; *How much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?* These words deserve our attention the more, because they are the first wherein we finde our Saviour mentioning the Gift of *the Holy Spirit* to his Disciples; and therefore let us consider their connexion with the precedent part of the Chapter, to come by that means to their true meaning: and hereby also we shall plainly see, what those effects are, for the producing of which the Holy Spirit is promised to us in this place.

We finde, *vers.* 1. that *one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray*; whereupon he taught them that *Form of Prayer, Our Father, &c.* Having thus answered their desire, he takes this occasion to require them to pray fervently and importunately, urging his Command with this Argument, that if they did so, they should certainly be heard, and their requests should be granted: for thus he speaks to them, *vers.* 9. *I say unto you, Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you: for every one that asketh receiveth, &c.* This argument is enforced by two *similitudes* (whereof the former makes way for the latter to proceed with more strength)



strength) towards the proving of this thing, that God will *hear* our earnest Prayers. The first is, that of a man that goes to his friend at *midnight* to beg *three Loaves* for the entertainment of another friend of his, *vers. 5, 6.* Now it is here observed, that the request was very troublesome and unseasonable, *vers. 7. Trouble me not, the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed:* and withal the trouble was so great, that the bare friendship that was between them would not have prevailed; *vers. 8. He will not rise and give him because he is his friend.* Yet, on the other side, 'tis observed, that two considerations prevailed with him, *viz.* that of the necessity, and that of the importunity of his friend: Yet because of his importunity, *he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.* Now from hence our Saviour concludes, *vers. 9.* that if we ask we shall have, *i. e.* God will give us whatsoever things we ask of him importunately, if those things are needful for us. And this with great reason; for 1. God is our best Friend, and greatest Benefactor. 2. We are never unseasonable to him; and the giving of what we ask is never uneasie to himself. Wherefore, if a man will grant to his friend what he is importunate with him for, if it be needful for him, though he cannot do it without trouble and uneasiness to himself; much more will God, who loveth us more than a man can do his friend, bestow such things upon us as are needful, if we earnestly desire him, since he can without any trouble to himself grant our requests.

In the next Similitude the Argument is improved: *If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if*  
*be*

*he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?*  
 vers. 11, 12. Now here 1. The Son asks of the Father, where, on the one hand, the natural affection is greater between a Father and his Son; and, on the other, the dependance greater in the Son upon his Father, than in one Friend upon another. 2. The Son requests food necessary to sustain himself, not for the entertainment of another, as in the former Similitude; wherefore seeing here is greater love on his part that is asked, greater dependance and necessity on his that asks, our Saviour concludes he will prevail: so that the Father instead of giving that which is necessary, will not give that which is *unprofitable*, as a Stone instead of *Bread*, much less will he instead of that which is *profitable* give that which is *hurtful*; as a Serpent for a *Fish*, and a Scorpion for an *Egg*. From hence our Saviour argues: *If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?* The Argument proceeds *à minori*, and the force of it lies in this; That earthly Parents, who may be tenacious towards others, and envy what they enjoy, (for in that sense *none* is taken, *Is thine eye evil because mine is good* ) will not yet be so towards their Children, when they ask such things as they need; much less will God, who is in this Similitude affirmed to be our *Father*, as in the former he is supposed to be our *Friend*, and who is good to all his creatures, who envieth no man's happiness, who *giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth none*; much less, I say, will he deny us his *Holy Spirit* if we ask him.

From hence it is evident, that the scope of our Sayiour in this Discourse, is to perswade his Disciples



Disciples to pray *fervently* for such things as are indeed *needful* for them; and that by this Argument, that God will grant such requests as these are: It is also evident that our Saviour concludes with this Argument in these words, *God will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.*

Wherefore I conceive we have gained one *note* of those spiritual Effects which the *Holy Spirit* is promised to work in our mindes, *viz.* that they are such as are indeed *needful*: For it is plain, that in both Similitudes the things that were asked, either by the *Friend* or the *Child*, were really such as they stood in *need* of, the one for his friend, the other for himself; and that this was one reason why they prevailed. Now from hence our Saviour infers, that God will much more give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him, *i. e.* for such purposes as are *needful*; otherwise the Argument will not hold. For we cannot infer from this consideration, that we are ready to bestow upon our Children what they *need*; therefore our heavenly Father will give us the Holy Spirit for such ends as are needful. If the demands of Children be not within the limits of Reason and Modesty; if they ask not to supply their real needs, but to gratifie their wanton appetites, it is consistent with the goodness of a Parent to deny such desires as those, and to rebuke the folly of them too. And if we should ask those gifts of the Holy Ghost which are not *needful* for us, this would be more than we are encouraged to do by the promise of *Christ*; and the compassion of our Heavenly Father may very well consist with the refusal of such Requests as these.



## SECT. 2.

But this *general* Rule, that we are to pray for such effects of the Holy Spirit, as are needful for us, would be insufficient to direct us what to pray for in *particular*, if we did not also understand what effects are *needful*. Now to satisfy you in this matter, I might presently produce those places of Scripture where the several effects of the Holy Spirit upon the mindes of Believers are mentioned; which work belongs properly to the second way propounded for the resolution of the present Question: But before I come to that, I shall try how far we may conclude from our Saviour's promise thus; *This is a needful Grace, therefore we are to pray for it*: and then I shall in due place proceed to the second Head, under which those Texts are to be considered; from whence we may conclude in this manner: *This Grace we are to pray for, therefore it is needful*. These methods of arguing will indeed bring us to the same conclusion, concerning what those effects are for which the Holy Spirit is promised in St. Luke. But by so doing they will afford mutual light to each other, and infer the conclusion with more strength; which I hope will not be judged unprofitable in a matter of so great weight for every Christian to be well satisfied about.

I begin with arguing from our *needs* to those Graces of the Holy Spirit which we are to pray for. Now because it is some *good* or advantage of ours, that is regarded in this promise of the Holy Spirit, and in respect whereof his Graces are supposed to be needful; we must in the first place

place set that *end* before us, by which we are to measure what effects are *needful* to be wrought in us by the Holy Spirit, and then consider what are indeed needful to that end: for so far as we understand this, we shall know what Graces to pray for, since we are to pray for those that are needful, and the needfulness of any thing must be judged of according to that end in respect whereof it is said to be needful.

1. As for the end it self, if we consider that this promise of the Holy Spirit is part of the New Covenant, there can be no reason to doubt, but the ultimate end of this promise, with regard to *our Good*, is our eternal Salvation and Glory: For that which is the last end of the whole Covenant, is the last end of every part of it. Now the state which Christ came to bring us to at last, is that of *seeing God as he is*, and living *for ever* in the enjoyment of his Love: For which reason St. John tells us, *This is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life*, 1 Joh. 2. 25. not as if the Gospel had no other promises; but because the rest are subordinate to this, and consequently that of the Holy Spirit must needs be so. Wherefore, in that promise of his Operations to produce all needful effects in our mindes, those are supposed to be such which are needful for our Eternal Salvation. Now

2. We must consider what effects are *needful* to be wrought in us for that end. The needfulness of any means to an end consists either in this, that the end cannot be attained without them at all, or not so well without them. That which is needful in the former sense, is absolutely *necessary*; that which is needful in the latter, is only *profitable*.

*fixable.* Let us therefore *first* consider what effects are absolutely *necessary* to be wrought in us in order to our eternal Salvation: what these are we are plainly told in the Scripture, and they may be comprised under these Heads. 1. Faith in *Jesus*, or believing him to be the Son of God, and so, one upon whose Authority we may safely rely as to whatever Revelations he hath made of God's Will: the necessity of which Faith, our Saviour hath told us in those words; *If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins*: Though indeed the Holy Spirit cannot be said to be promised in this place of *St. Luke* for the producing of Faith in this notion, it being apparently supposed, that whatever is here promised, is promised to the Disciples of *Jesus*, who do already believe him to be the *Christ*. 2. So much knowledge of the Christian Doctrine (which is Faith in another notion) as is necessary to instruct us *in*, and encourage us *to*, that Repentance and Holiness which the Gospel requires in order to Salvation.

When we believe in *Christ*, our next care must be to know what his will is, and to possess our mindes with those principles of Obedience, without which *it is impossible to please God*: For if it be necessary to salvation to do the Will of *Christ*, it is equally necessary to understand his Revelations, his Laws, and Promises, in that measure which is necessary to the doing of his Will; and therefore a Believer is encouraged by this promise of our Saviour, to ask the Holy Spirit, that he may *use the means* of arriving to such needful knowledge, *in that manner* as not to miss of it. 3. All those Vertues and Graces, which make up practical Christianity, and consist in having our mindes set free from the dominion of all sensual and worldly



worldly Lusts, and in *sincere* obedience to the Commands of *Christ*: So that we make it our greatest care to keep every one of his Laws, endeavouring to grow *better* in some proportion to those means which we enjoy by the good providence of God. What these Vertues are in particular, we may know by the precepts of the Gospel; and principally by our Saviours Sermon from the Mount, where he directs his Disciples in the way to everlasting Blessedness, obliging all whose office it is *to teach*, and all his Disciples whatsoever, *to do the very least of his Commandments*, upon pain of being excluded out of *the Kingdom of Heaven*. All those dispositions of Minde therefore, which are supposed to the keeping of these his Commandments, are *effects* necessary to our eternal Happiness, and such as we are to ask of God that they may be produced in us by his Holy Spirit. And look whatever Vertue or Qualification of our Wills and Affections the Gospel lays so great a stress upon, that if we want it, it is not possible for us in that state to see the Kingdom of God; that is an effect so needful to be wrought in us, that we may be sure our *Heavenly Father* (such is his compassion towards us) will no more deny us his Holy Spirit to that end, if we importunately ask him, than we can refuse to give our most beloved Children *Bread*, or any other good thing as necessary for them as that. 4. After we are brought into this state, and thus become the sincere Disciples of *Christ*, it is equally necessary to our eternal Salvation, that we persevere therein: *For it had been better for us not to have known the way of righteousness, than after we have known it* (so as to escape the pollutions of the world) *to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto us*, 2 Pet: 2.20, 21. And therefore constancy

constancy and unweariedness in well-doing is also a Grace, for the obtaining of which we are encouraged by our Saviour's Promise to ask the Holy Spirit, that *we may be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation*. I know not any effects that are absolutely necessary to Salvation, which are not plainly implied, and readily deducible from some of these. And thus much for the former sort of needful Graces, *viz.* such as without which Salvation cannot be attained at all, being indispensibly necessary thereunto.

*Secondly*, I come to speak of those Graces which are *profitable* to Salvation; and these are such as regard our improvement either in *Goodness* or in *Knowledge*. Of the former sort are those degrees of goodness, according to which sincere Christians, who are all careful to avoid *wilful* sin, and endeavour to *grow in Grace*, do yet excel one another. These degrees consist in being more or less free from *sins of mere infirmity*, an absolute freedom from which is that which our condition in this world cannot admit of: but every degree towards Perfection which we attain unto in this kinde, must needs be so much the more profitable by how much greater it is. We are the better able to conclude certainly of our good estate towards God, which is a matter of great advantage in the course of a Godly Life; whereas a man may be conscious to himself of so many of these sins, that it may be a difficult matter for himself, or any body else, to pronounce certainly concerning his Spiritual estate; and therefore the only good advice that can be given him in that case seems to be this; to put the matter out of doubt, by using more effectual endeavours after a further amendment. Besides, the nearer we

come to Perfection, the further off are we from Apostacy, and the less in danger of back-sliding into a wicked course of Life; we are the more confirmed in ways of Godliness and Vertue, and more likely to persevere therein to the end. Finally, the degrees towards Perfection, wherein some good men excel others, are *profitable*; because they will encrease their reward in Heaven: For *God will judge every man according to his works*; and therefore they that have done better shall have a better reward; they that have done worse than others shall be *beaten with more Stripes*; and there seems to be the same reason for a proportionable difference in Rewards. When St. Peter exhorts us, that Christian Vertues should not be *in us* onely, but *abound*, he gives this reason for the Exhortation, *viz. that an entrance may be ministered unto us abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord*, 2 Pet. 1. 11. Upon all these accounts, those degrees towards Perfection, which consist in prevailing against sins of mere Infirmitie, are highly profitable in the way of Salvation.

The latter sort of profitable things, are such degrees of *Knowledge* in divine matters, as are not simply necessary for Salvation. The more knowledge a Christian hath, the better able he is to avoid all errors that are dangerous; and thus that knowledge which is not absolutely necessary may be *profitable to himself*. Likewise the more a man understands in Religion, the more useful he may be to *others*, in promoting their Salvation, by rescuing them from dangerous Errour, and removing Doubts, and many other ways.

If it now be demanded whether we can conclude



clude from our Saviour's promise, that if we ask *the Holy Spirit* for *needful* Graces of this sort, God will grant our Request: I answer;

1. It follows in general from our Saviours promise, that God will give the Holy Spirit, not only for what is *necessary* to Salvation, but also for what is profitable and advantageous to us in the way of Salvation. For our Saviour assureth us, that God in bestowing his Holy Spirit will use us with the Kindness and Bounty of a Father. Now we know, that although the affection of wise and good Parents towards their Children, will not carry them to gratifie their wanton and unreasonable Desires, yet neither will they deal so straitly and narrowly with them, as to give them what is but barely needful to keep them from perishing. To this purpose we may observe, that two of the good things mentioned by our Saviour, *viz.* the *Egge* and the *Fish*, which Parents are not wont to deny their Children, are instances of that Food which is not absolutely *Necessary* but *Convenient*, and of ordinary use for the preservation of Life. Now the Affection of our Heavenly Father being *much more* than that of Earthly Parents, it may strongly be concluded in the general, that God will not deny us what is profitable, any more than what is necessary to Salvation. But

2. It doth not follow in every particular: That is, I have no reason thus to conclude, *This is usefull, therefore if I Ask, it shall be given me.* For you must observe that our Saviour argues from the *Fatherly* Goodness of God, that he will grant our request. Now we cannot argue *against* that Goodness of God, if he doth not grant every particular request of this kinde; 1. Because he may grant me

the effect of my request, which is to obtain something *profitable* for Salvation, though he doth not give me that *particular* which I ask ; for he may give me another thing more profitable than that, instead of it ; and then he is far from being *less good* for so doing. As if a Child asks his Parent for such a *Fish*, and he gives him a better, or another sort of food more proper for him, he is not the less bountiful ; and though perhaps he doth not please him so well, yet he doth not deny him the effect of his request. Thus I may pray for knowledge in some point of Religion, which I would fain be satisfied in, while in the mean time I may lie under a greater need than at present I am sensible of, not having improved that *knowledge*, which God hath already blessed me with, to those degrees of *Goodness* which I might and ought to have attained by it ; and in this case the knowledge I ask might probably *puff* me *up* rather than *edifie* me : Wherefore if God doth not bless my endeavours after it, with the thing itself, but instead thereof give me a better *knowledge* of *my self*, helping me to rectifie some disorder in my Will and Affections ; he gives me that which is more profitable, than that which I ask in particular. 2. God may grant me all those profitable things which are suitable to that *place* and *condition*, which he hath appointed to me ; and then I ought not to question his *paternal* goodness, if he denies my particular request of some profitable thing, which is more suitable to anothers condition, than mine own. If a Father should allow a more liberal maintenance to one of his Sons, who serves him in a more expensive employment than the rest, they are not to take it ill, that he has not made them all equal ; but on the other hand to acknowledge his goodness, if every one

of

of them have a convenient allowance proportionable to their needs. Thus if I, that am but a private Christian, labour to know as much in divine things as my spiritual Guide, and pray for Gods blessing upon my endeavours, do yet fail of my desire; I must not conclude that God is wanting in his kindness to me, if upon my industry in searching for knowledge with a sincere intent, he grants me that measure of profitable Understanding, which is suitable to my state, education and calling, and abundantly sufficient to all the purposes of Christian Life, as to my own particular, or for the Government of my Family, if that be my case also. To this it must be added, that God knows what profitable things are most suitable to us, better than we our selves: Though Children are humbly to *acquiesce* in the allowance of their Parents, yet they may not alwaies be bound to *believe*, that it is made with good judgment, and proportioned wisely to their needs. But here 'tis otherwise; for as we may conclude from the *Goodness* of God, that if we are *sincere* and *diligent*, he will give us such profitable things, as he judgeth to be most suitable to our condition: So we may likewise argue from his *Wisdom*, that he cannot be mistaken in judging what that is, though we may, and thereupon ask some profitable thing in particular, which his Goodness may very well consist with the denial of. Finally, It is consistent with the Fatherly Goodness of God, in bestowing what is *profitable* for Salvation, upon every one that asketh, to use his Sovereign Power in giving to one *more* than to another: for though upon my sincere endeavours and prayers, I may promise my self from that his Goodness, besides the *necessaries*, what is *abundantly profitable* in answer to my Needs; I may



not every profitable thing which I can think of, or which I see another, of my own rank in other respects, favoured withal. Wherefore I have no reason to complain if I see another man *wiser than his Teachers*, while I need to be instructed by them; or, if I am a *Teacher*, to see my self so far excelled by those of my own profession, that it is fit for me to be a *Learner* under them. For these Reasons it doth not follow, in every particular, that if I ask something that is profitable, God will grant it. Yet

3. We are to remember, that a great difference is to be put between things *profitable*, viz. between *degrees* of improvement in *Goodness*, on the one hand, and in *Knowledge* on the other. There is this difference between them; that the former do of themselves recommend us to the greater Love and Favour of God; the latter not so, but only as they are the fruit of sincere Love, and study of the Truth, (which is a branch of Righteousness) and accompanied with an upright care to do the will of God more perfectly. Therefore let a sincere Christian pray for any degree of Righteousness and Holiness which his imperfect condition in this world will admit of, though he cannot conclude that God will grant that particular request, merely because he asks something that is *profitable*; for so is every degree of *Knowledge* too: yet he has this reason to conclude, which is not common to praying for profitable Knowledge, that he prays for something which God loves for *it self*, and which he will be the more pleased with him for obtaining. That delight which God takes in the persons of men, is not founded upon the mere improvements of their Understandings, but upon the sincerity of their Obedience, which the

the Scripture doth often witness to us in such places as these ; *The Righteous Lord loveth Righteousness, his countenance doth behold the upright*, Psal. 11. 7. *The prayer of the upright is his delight*, Prov. 15. 8. *The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord ; but he loveth him that FOLLOWETH after Righteousness*, vers. 9. Whence we may conclude, that the more we grow in Grace and Virtue, the more God loveth us, and therefore that he will give the Holy Spirit to encrease all Christian virtues in us, to such degrees towards Perfection, as are proportionable to our Prayers and Endeavours in *Following after Righteousness*.

From which we may see what encouragement we have to study the defects and infirmities of our Wills as particularly as we can, and to observe the several Irregularities of our thoughts and affections with our best attention ; since by this means we may employ our care and prayers against them more effectually : for the more *particular* and *importunate* we are in so doing, the more is God pleased with us ; and therefore he will not fail to answer the sincerity of our intention with a proportionable gift of the *Holy Spirit*.

But as for *other sorts of profitable things*, ( such as greater measures of knowledge ) which do not of themselves recommend us to God, we are not to ask them so *particularly*, or if we do, not so *absolutely* as the former. I may, and ought to pray for them in general ; and particularly for those degrees of them, which are proper for my condition, if I govern a Family ; for so much knowledge, as may well serve me to bring up those that are under me, in the fear of God, and the way of

Salvation ; or if I am a Minister, for that understanding in Religion which may best fit me to discharge that duty I owe to God, of guiding those souls to Heaven that are committed to my trust : but if I pray more particularly, for the understanding of such a difficult Point in Religion, which I would satisfy my self or others about, I must not do it absolutely, but with submission to God's wisdom and pleasure.

Thus have I endeavoured to shew what qualifications of minde we are to pray for, under this notion of their being *needful* to Salvation ; and consequently what those effects are, for the producing of which, the Operations of the Holy Spirit are promised to Believers, in *Luke 11. 13.* Dr. *Owen* indeed thinks that there is a certain change of the minde, of a very different nature from any that I have named, *necessary* to Salvation ; which he makes to be the *Great work* of the Spirit upon the Souls of Believers : I shall not be long before I come to consider what reason he has for it. In the mean time, it may not be amiss to observe what conclusions may be made from this promise of *the Holy Spirit*, which we have begun with the Consideration of. And the first is

### § ECT. 3.

1. That we *ask the Holy Spirit in the Lords Prayer* ; which as it may be concluded from the perfection of that Form in general ; so more particularly from the coherence of our Saviour's Discourse in this place, upon occasion of that request made by one of his Disciples, that he would  
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*teach them to pray.* For, to satisfy the request fully, he did these two things. 1. He taught them what things to pray for, by prescribing to them the use of this Form: *Our Father who art in Heaven, &c.* 2. He taught them in what manner to pray for these things, that they might obtain them, *viz.* to pray importunately and fervently for them, as 'tis plain from *vers. 9.* compared with *vers. 8.* and one reason given by him, upon which they may conclude God will grant their requests is this, that they ask onely *needful* things.

Now it is very improbable, that our Saviour should have left out so needful a Request, as that of the Holy Spirit, in that Prayer which he had taught them; for then he did not instruct them so fully what needful things to pray for, by *prescribing that Form* as he did, in what manner they should pray for those things, by the *following directions.* But much more improbable is it that he left that Request out of this Form, considering that he chose the gift of *the Holy Spirit*, for an instance of what might be obtained by Prayer, *so soon*, after he had commanded his Disciples to use the Form of his prescribing. For this gift of the Holy Ghost is the greatest blessing that is now to be obtained under Heaven; and it is not credible that he should immediately, as it were, tax his own Form of so much imperfection, as the want of that Request must suppose in it: Or, that he should let his Disciples know, there was no other way to obtain *the Holy Spirit* but by asking; though he had not before taught them to ask it in the Prayer which he had given them.

But lastly, there is no necessity of inferring this  
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Conclusion from the coherence of our Saviour's Discourse, since the gift of *the Holy Ghost* comprehends the gift of all those *Heavenly Graces* which we ask in the Lords Prayer; and therefore the meaning of those words, *God will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him*, is this, God will give the Disciples of *Christ* such *needful Graces* as he hath taught them to ask in that excellent Form which he gave to his Disciples. And this indeed makes the coherence of our Saviour's Discourse most clear and accurate: For upon this supposition, you see that he does at last instance in such a request, *viz.* that of *the Holy Spirit*, which is a brief Summary of all the most considerable matters that he had taught them to pray for before, Wherefore observe, that

2. We pray for *the Holy Spirit* when we pray for any Grace or Virtue; or for any Disposition of minde which is needful to qualifie us for the Kingdom of God. In the Lords Prayer, wherein the Holy Spirit is asked, the Petition is not *formally* exprest, but contained under other words; for instance, under these amongst others, *Thy Will be done, as in Heaven, so in Earth*: For in this Petition we pray, That till we come to the perfect heavenly state, we may by the *Divine Spirit* be disposed to such a submissive and cheerful performance of the Will of God upon Earth, as may bear some resemblance, and carry some proportion to that absolute readiness of minde, wherewith the Angels, and the *Spirits of just men made perfect*, and wherewith we our selves do hope ere long to perform the Will of God in the Kingdom of Heaven. I say, although in that Petition we do not expressly ask *the Holy Spirit*, yet in effect we do; because we pray for such a temper

temper of minde as may qualifie us for the heavenly Life hereafter. And to ask of God so needful a Grace as this is, is, as I have already shewn by the plain scope of our Saviour's Discourse, the same thing with asking the Holy Spirit. Now for the same reason in every Petition, wherein we beg of God that we may be able to subdue any Lust, that we may be endued with any Christian Virtue, or grow in any Grace; In every such Petition, I say, we ask *the Holy Spirit*; because this is to ask those needful things for which his *Operations* are promised to us. Therefore those Prayers of our Church, that *God would make us to have a perpetual fear and love of his holy Name; that he would give unto us the increase of Faith, Hope, and Charity; that he would keep us from all things hurtful, and lead us to all things profitable for our salvation*; together with all the yearly *Collects*, are Prayers for the gift of the Holy Spirit; *i. e.* for the several Graces of the true Disciple of *Christ*, which are expressly ascribed to the Spirit in that Prayer, that *God would grant to us his Spirit, to think and to do always such things as be rightfult; that we who cannot do any thing that is good without him, may by him be enabled to live according to his will.* And this I have by the way observed, that you may see how fully our publick Prayers agree to that rule of our Saviour concerning what we are to pray for, *viz.* that we are to ask of God to give us the Holy Spirit; which is done both when we use the *formal* Petition, and when we pray for any Divine Grace, or Christian Virtue. And when our Souls *breath* after true Goodness, when they *hunger* and *thirst* after Righteousness, when they zealously *strive* against every evil desire, and every evil work, *that we may perfect Holiness in the fear of God*; then do we *importunately* ask the Holy Spirit, we do



do effectually invoke him, and *attract* those Divine Aids to our selves, which will make us what we desire to be, the true followers of *Christ*, and *holy as he was holy in all manner of Conversation*.

3. And by consequence the Operations of the Holy Spirit are supposed in those places of Scripture, where God is said to give or work any Grace or good Disposition in our mindes: for if it be the same thing to ask any such *Grace*, and to ask *the Holy Spirit*, then the same thing is meant by Gods *giving* the one, and his *giving* the other; *i. e.* as Dr. Owen very often and very truly notes, when God bestoweth any Blessing of this nature, *he doth it by his Spirit*. So that all *those Texts* which ascribe Christian Vertues to a Divine Operation, and consequently *those Prayers* of St. Paul in behalf of the Christians, that God would make them eminent in all kindes of Goodness, are places pertinent to this subject, and proper to inform us what we are to believe concerning those Operations of the Holy Spirit, which I am now discoursing of. But that which is most necessary of all to observe is this:

4. That this promise of our Saviour concerning the Holy Spirit, does equally regard the Church in all ages, to the end of the world. For those Effects which his Operations are here promised to produce, are needful for all Christians; and not only for those to whom *Christ* spake in person. Now the reason why God would give his Holy Spirit to them being this, that they needed those things which he had taught them to pray for, and because God was their Father; it follows that upon the performance of the same condition we shall obtain the Holy Spirit; for God is our Father too, and those things  
we

we ask in the Lords Prayer, are as needful for us, and for all Believers, as they could be for them to whom the Promise was made at first. Therefore the gift of the Holy Ghost here promised did not determine with the age of Miracles.

Lastly, it is not improbable, that as by the latter Similitude where it is observed, that Children obtain of their Parents things needful for themselves, our Saviour doth encourage every one of his Disciples to ask the Holy Spirit in his *own* behalf; So by the former Similitude, where the man is said to prevail, who requested of his Neighbour what was needful for his Friend, we are encouraged to pray for *one another*, that God would give us his Holy Spirit to convert us from all our sins, and to encrease his Graces in us. This I conceive may be one intention of our Saviour in that Similitude, *viz.* to excite us to this kind of Charity, by letting us know that we fare the better for the earnest Prayers we make in each others behalf; and it is the more probable, because he used that Similitude immediately after he had taught his Disciples to pray for one another, by prescribing to them a Form of Prayer, in the use of which they could not do otherwise. Linh

These things seem to be clearly implied in that place of *St. Luke* which we have been considering, and not improper to be observed. And now I should forthwith proceed to those places of Scripture which expressly mention the several Graces of the Holy Spirit, and shew that those needful effects, for the producing of which the Holy Spirit is here in *general* promised to Believers, are in several of them *particularly* ascribed to his Operations. But I am sensible that I should then leave

leave behinde me a great Objection against what I have already said, *viz.* that I have given a very lame account of those Qualifications which are *needful* to Salvation. For Dr. *Owen* comes and tells us, that there is a Qualification of quite another kinde than any I have named, absolutely necessary to Salvation; and that, you must know, is *Regeneration*. Now indeed our Saviour saith, *Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God*, John 3. 3. And this Regeneration our Saviour likewise ascribeth to the Operation of the *Holy Spirit*; *Except a man be born of the Spirit he cannot, &c. vers. 5.* Wherefore God forbid that any Christian should deny Regeneration to be *needful* even in the degree of necessity, to qualifie us for eternal Life, or to be an effect of the Holy Spirit, wherever it is. But I cannot think it to be so unintelligible a thing as our Author represents it, who makes it to be somewhat distinct from believing and obeying the Gospel of *Christ*. Wherefore I shall in the next place particularly enquire into the true notion of Regeneration: and because this is not onely a matter of great Consequence, but the great *Out-cry* which has been long raised by the Doctor, and his Brethren of the Separation, against the present Ministers of the Church of *England*, is this, that we are not Orthodox in the point of Regeneration; I shall thoroughly consider what the Doctor hath written *Pro* and *Con* in this Book of his concerning it.



## C H A P. III.

*Of the state of Regeneration.*

## S E C T. I.

**T**Hat we are *Regenerated* by the Operations of the Holy Spirit, and thereby qualified for eternal Life, is agreed between us; but I can by no means grant our Authors notion of *Regeneration* to be true; and I think his mistake in that, may have led him into divers others. To proceed therefore with the more clearness, I come to shew what it is to be *Regenerate* or *born again*. And here I shall be forced to consider the *Doctors* notion of *Regeneration* as far as I can understand it; because if the principle upon which he goes in stating his notion be true, it fundamentally overthrows that which I take to be the true Scriptural notion thereof. For he contends, that these Expressions, *to be born again*, *to be a new creature*, and *to have a new heart*, and the like, do properly and literally signify that which is intended by them. I say they signify it figuratively: It must therefore be debated in the first place, whether they be *proper* or *Metaphorical* expressions, before we can settle the true notion of the words. This must be done by inquiring whether to be *born again*, *to have a new heart*, and *to be created anew*, can properly be affirmed of those that are qualified to enter into the *Kingdom of Heaven*; If not, we are next to consider what *figurative* sense it is in which these expressions are to be understood.

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By determining which, according to the Scriptures, we shall come to the right notion of Regeneration.

P. 184

But (so troublesome a thing it is to deal with a Writer that plays fast and loose) I must yet go further about to come to the business, and begin with making good my charge against our Author, that he contends for the *proper* use of these words. For some passages he hath himself that look another way, and might perswade a man that he did not understand those Scripture-expressions *literally* and *properly*, but *figuratively*. Thus he tells us, *This new creature therefore doth not consist in a new course of actions, but in renewed faculties, with new Dispositions, Power, and Ability, to them and for them.* These *Dispositions* he saith are the *Divine Nature* spoken of by St. Peter, a *divine principle of operation*; and hereunto, saith he, St. Paul exhorts in these words, *Be ye renewed in the spirit of your mindes.* If now the new Creature, the state of Regeneration, consists in the *renewing of our Faculties*, our Wills and Understandings, that is, in furnishing them with *new Dispositions, Power, and Ability for a new course of Actions*; then it is not *literally* true of that man, who is thus fitted for the Kingdom of God, that he is a new creature, but onely *figuratively*, i. e. that he is the old creature still, onely bettered; hath the *same Will and Understanding* that he had before, but these *renewed* and made *better* than they were before; and that God doth not properly give a man another Understanding, or another Heart which he had not before, when he is said to Regenerate him, but that he reforms the old, furnishing them with *new Abilities and Dispositions.*

Again

Again he saith in the same Section, that the *New creature consists in the universal Change of the whole Soul, as it is the principle of all Moral and Spiritual Actions.* If that be true, then here is the same Soul there was before, only it is changed from *bad* to *good*; and whereas it was hitherto dispos'd to evil Actions, it is now byass'd by better Principles than it was before, and disposed to those Actions that are good, and pleasing to God. Consequently it is not true, in the *Literal* sence, of that man who is fit to see the Kingdom of God, that he is *Born again*, and is a *New Creature*, and hath a new Heart, Will and Understanding.

Now these, and other such passages in the *Doctōr's Book*, were either inserted by him, that he might the more fairly retreat, in case he should be forced to quit the *Literal and proper sence*, or else (which sometimes happens) he spake the truth against his will. For whatever he hath said to this purpose, he earnestly contends, that those expressions of the *New Creature* and *Regeneration*, are to be understood in their proper sence. And even in this very Section he tells us, *It is called the New* sect. 21.  
*man, because it is the effect of Gods creating Power, and that in a way of a new Creation.* Now the object of a creating Act is an *Instantaneous production*; whatever preparations there may be for it, the *Bringing forth of a New Form and Being* by creation is in an *instant*. Which words plainly suppose that there is a *New being* properly created in man, when he is said to be *Born again*, and to become a *New creature*; and he argues from the *Literal sence* of *Creation*, to prove that a man is made a *new Creature* in an instant, for the object of a creating Power is an *Instantaneous production*.



Again he saith, *The new creature is produced in the Souls of men by a creating Act of the Power of God, or it is not a Creature; and it is superinduced into the essential Faculties of our Souls, or it is not a New creature; for whatever is in the Soul of Power, Disposition, and Ability, or inclination unto God, or for any moral Actions by Nature, it belongs unto the old creation, it is no New creature; And it must be something that hath a being and subsistence of its own in the soul, or it can be neither New nor a Creature.* This passage is strangely perplexed; for by what our Author saith concerning the disposition and inclinablen of the Soul to God, one would guess he was for the *Metaphorical* sence, and all the rest carries it clearly for the *Literal*. But that we might know his meaning, he falls foul upon them, that say the expression is *Metaphorical*, and consequently that the *New creature is a Moral man that hath changed his course and way*; and in a triumphant manner tells us, *This is good Gospel, at once overthrowing Original Sin, and the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.* I may in time convince the Reader, that he is neither to trust this Author what those Doctrines are, which overthrow these things, nor what the Judgment of our Conformable Divines is in these matters. At present my business is to fix this man to a certain sence, and to make it good, that what I charge him with is his opinion. He saith plainly, that the *New creature hath a being and subsistence of its own in the Soul, and 'tis superinduced into the essential faculties of the Soul, otherwise it could not be New nor a Creature*; that is, literally and properly so, for it may figuratively; so that, besides the heart which the Sinner had before, he hath now another, and then I grant the expression is not *Metaphorical*. He tells us, *That which is born of the Spirit, is a new spiritual being, creature, nature,*

*nature, life, as shall be declared.* Now he declares <sup>ibid.</sup> what his meaning is by these expressions very solemnly, where he renounceth at large that opinion, which makes them to be *Metaphorical*, and hath these remarkable words among the rest: *So long as we can obtain an acknowledgment from men that the writings of the New Testament are true, and in any sence the word of God, we doubt not but to evince that the things intended in them, i. e. the things signified by Regeneration, New creature, &c. are properly expressed, i. e. by those Phrases; so as they ought to be, which no body denies, and so as they are capable to be expressed; i. e. (if he be consistent to himself) that they cannot be expressed more properly.* Again: *Some, meaning himself and his Party, judge the things of the Gospel to be deep and mysterious, the words and expressions of it to be plain and proper. Others, meaning his Adversaries, think the words and expressions of it to be Mystical and Figurative, but the things intended to be ordinary and obvious.* By all which, and much more to the same purpose, it is plain, that this he must stand to as his opinion; That the forementioned expressions are not to be understood *Metaphorically*, but *literally and properly*. And now my next work is plain, which is this: 1. To prove that they are not so to be understood, as he saith they are. 2. To answer those Arguments which are produced by him to the contrary.

## SECT. 2.

I shall first prove that these expressions ought not to be understood *Literally and properly*. And I prove it thus.



1. Because it is in it self *absurd* so to understand them. 2. Because they cannot be so understood without contradicting the Scriptures.

1. Because it is in itself absurd so to understand them. The Reason is, because these expressions of *being Regenerated*, i. e. *Born again*, and *being Created*, do properly note *divers* things, and yet our Author will confess that the *same* thing is to be understood by them, when they are used to express the state of a man qualified for the Kingdom of Heaven, or to note the Causes of that state; wherefore to say also that they are properly to be understood, is to say that the *same* thing is to be understood by them, and *not the same*. That they properly note divers things is plain, for *to be Born* is one thing, *to be Created* is another. *Adam* by being *Created* could not properly be said to be *Born*; nor when an Infant is *Born*, can it be properly said to be *Created*. Therefore to *Create* and *Regenerate*, and *to be Created* and *Regenerated*, cannot properly be understood, when they are used to express the same thing, (as by all they are confessed to do in the case before us) because properly they do not signifie *one* and the *same*, but *divers* things.

This will farther appear, if we consider what other expressions the Scripture useth to note our being Regenerated and Created anew. It is called our being *Drawn to Christ*, John 6. 44. and our being *Awakened*, 1 Cor. 15. 34. and our being *raised from the dead*, Col. 3. 1. Ephes. 2. 1. Now by the same reason, as we shall see afterwards, that being *Regenerated*, and *Created*, and having a new Heart, and a new Spirit and Understanding, must be properly understood, all those other expressions



pressions must be properly understood too : and then what monstrous absurdities do we charge upon the Scripture ? For no man can properly be said to be *raised from the Dead* that was not *created* before. How can it then be properly said, that a man is raised from the dead, and created by the same act ? No man can be said properly to be *awakened*, who is not *alive*. How then is it possible that to *give life* and to *awaken* should be the same thing in the literal sence of those words ? Or how can all these things be properly *drawing*, which in the literal sence is not akin to any of them ? But now, according to a figurative use of these expressions, they may be all used to express the same thing, without any absurdity at all, as any man may see that understands what is meant by them, and which I shall ere-long endeavour to explain.

Wherefore to retort the *Doct̃or's* charge upon himself, which he hath laid against those who contend that these are *Metaphorical* expressions; *If it be so*, that they are, as he saith, proper expressions, then our Lord Jesus was so far from bringing the *Doctr̃ine of Regeneration* to more light, by what he teacheth concerning it, that he cast it thereby into more obscurity and darkness, than ever it was delivered in before. And again, if all these expressions are properly to be understood, the *Scriptures* must be granted to be obscure, beyond those of any other *Writers* whatsoever, always excepting our *Author's* upon this subject. P. 175.

2. These expressions cannot be literally understood without contradicting the *Scriptures* ; which I thus prove. If he that is regenerated be a *new creature* in the literal sence, and hath properly

a *new nature*; then there must either be a removal of the *former Nature*, and an introduction of a new one in the room of it; or else the addition of a new Nature to the former. But to affirm either of these things to be true in the proper sense, is to contradict the Scriptures.

That the former Nature is properly renewed, and another introduced into the room of it, is contrary, 1. To those texts which clearly affirm that the same persons who are now regenerate, were once unregenerate; as when St. Paul saith, *Such were some of you; but ye are washed; but ye are sanctified, &c.* 1 Cor. 6. 11. that is, they were the same persons, though now regenerate. But if in Regeneration, literally and properly, one nature is taken away, and another given, Regeneration cannot be said to be a change of the same man, but the *Annihilation* of one man, and the *Creation* of another: for to take away one Nature, and to give another; to take away one Understanding and Will, and to put in another, is properly to put one Soul into the Body, after the destruction of another. 2. 'Tis contrary to those Scriptures which suppose sin to remain in the Regenerate; as when St. James saith, *In many things we offend all*, James 3. 2. And then they are much mistaken who tell us, that those words in Rom. 7. 14. *But I am carnal, sold under sin*, to be spoken in the person of a regenerate man. For supposing the old Nature to be taken away, which is the only Nature wherein there is a *principle of sin*, and the new Nature given, which is the Divine Nature, it is impossible that Corruption and Sin should remain behinde; for there is no *principle* from whence it should proceed. None in the *new Nature*; for that is the *Divine Nature*:

ture : None in the *old*; for that is *taken away*.

But *this* seems not to be the notion in which the Doctor owns the Literal sence; but those passages of his which we have already noted, would encline a man to believe that he favours the *other*, viz. that Regeneration doth signifie the addition of a new Nature to the *old*: For the new creature, according to him, *bath a being and subsistence of its own in the Soul*, and it is *superinduced into the essential faculties of the Soul*. So that our former Souls do remain still; and if the new creature be literally to be understood, then, according to our Author, there is a new creature added to the *old*. And indeed this is clearly the consequence of his arguing: For when he undertakes to explain that Text of St. Paul, 2 Cor. p. 13. 5. 17. *If any man be in Christ he is a new creature*, he tells us that *the new creature* (which he that is in Christ is) *bath a being and subsistence of its own in the Soul, and is superinduced, &c.* wherefore, 1. The former creature remains, *i. e.* the essential faculties of the Soul: and 2. The new creature is a creature or being properly distinct from the essential faculties of the Soul, *i. e.* from the former creature. Wherefore the Regenerate man is properly two creatures; he is the *old* creature, because the *essential faculties of his Soul* remain; he is the *new* creature, as the Apostle himself saith, *i. e.* according to the Doctor's explication, a creature that is *superinduced into* the *old*, and hath *a being and subsistence of its own*. Now besides the absurdity of making a regenerate man to be two creatures properly distinct from one another, the *Old*, and the *New*; the literal sence this way clearly contradicts what the Scripture saith concerning the state of Regeneration; (which is



the thing I am concerned to prove: ) for the Scripture makes the state of Regeneration to consist in having *the Heart of stone taken away*, as well as *the Heart of flesh given*; in *putting off the Old man*, as well as in *putting on the New*; and when St. Paul saith, *He that is in Christ is a new creature*, we are not to understand that he is the old creature too: for he tells us *all old things are pass'd away, and all things are become new*. Now thus I argue: If these expressions are to be understood literally, then it is literally true, that the old man, the old creature is put off, &c. as well as the new man put on; and therefore it is contrary to Scripture to affirm Regeneration to consist in the *addition* of a new creature, literally understood, to the old.

Lastly, since the Scripture doth express the state of Regeneration by phrases, which literally and properly taken, do *some* of them signify the *addition* of a new Nature to the old, and others the *removal* of the old Nature, with a *substitution* of the new; it is impossible that the literal and proper sense should be intended.

Thus I have proved the literal sense of these expressions to be inconsistent with the Scriptures: and having before proved the absurd consequences, which understanding them in this manner is chargeable with, I hope it is sufficiently proved, that they are not so to be understood; which was the first thing to be done.

The consequence of what hath been said is clear, that if they are not to be understood *literally* and *properly*, then are they to be understood *figuratively* and *metaphorically*; and nothing can be

be reasonably desired for the farther clearing of this point, but to answer our Author's arguments against it; which was the second thing proposed.

### SECT. 3.

All that he saith to the contrary, which can pretend to ~~be~~ arguing, we have *Señ. 7.* where his Arguments against the Metaphorical use of these expressions are two; ( though they are there jumbled together by him without any distinction ) whereof one lies against affirming *Regeneration* to be a *metaphorical* expression, or rather such an expression, of what, he saith, his Adversaries understand by it: the other lies against the supposition of any metaphorical expressions whatsoever whereby the Scripture is said to represent the work of God's Spirit upon the Souls of men. P. 175. 69

The former Argument is to this purpose: *If Regeneration be no more than a metaphorical expression of amendment of Life according to the rules of the Scripture, then our Saviour proposed unto Nicodemus a thing which he knew perfectly well before, onely under a new name and notion which he had never heard of before, so to take an advantage of charging him of being ignorant of what indeed he full well knew and understood: But this he saith is a blasphemous imagination; therefore Regeneration is no metaphorical expression of, &c.*

The latter Argument ( if you will be so civil as to call it an Argument ) is designed against the opinion that the Scripture useth any Metaphors at all in this matter. For thus he concludes;



cludes ; Some judge the things of the Gospel to be deep and mysterious, the words and expressions of it to be plain and proper. Others think the words and expressions of it to be mystical and figurative, but the things intended to be ordinary, and obvious to the Natural Reason of every man. Now that which he thinks, is, that the things are mysterious, and the words proper. His Argument to prove this is contained in these passages. *If there be not a secret mysterious work of the Spirit of God upon the Souls of men intended in the Writings of the New Testament, they must be granted to be obscure, beyond those of any other Writers whatsoever ——— If they are the Word of God, the things intended in them are clearly and properly expressed ; The difficulties which seem to be in them, arising from the mysterious nature of the things themselves contained in them, and the weakness of our minds in apprehending such things, and not from any obscurity or intricacy in the declaration of them.* Therefore some do well to judge the things of the Gospel to be deep and mysterious, and the words of it to be plain and proper. If there be any coherence in this Arguing, I think it would be this : If there be a mysterious Work of the Spirit upon the Souls of men intended in the Scripture, then the words and expressions of the Gospel concerning it, are plain and proper ; and such a mysterious work there is, otherwise the Scriptures are obscure beyond all other Writings, because the words of the Gospel are proper expressions of such a mysterious work. I begin with this latter Argument.

First of all let us consider the Doctor's Conclusion, that we may afterwards see whether it is to be found in the Premises. If he concludes any thing against his Adversaries, he concludes that the Scripture hath used no Metaphorical expressions at all



all of the things of the Gospel. For he saith, *Here in indeed consists the main controversie whereunto things with the most are reduced, viz. that he and his friends judge the things of the Gospel to be mysterious, and the words and expressions proper; that is, A L L the words and expressions of it.* For if he concludes only that some, or the greater part of them are proper and not figurative expressions, he concludes what none of his Adversaries deny; and unless he concludes universally, he proves nothing. Now by the way I shall convince our Author, that he hath concluded amiss for himself, by putting him in minde, that he elsewhere acknowledgeth that very thing of the Gospel, which is the subject of our Debate, to be in the Scripture *Metaphorically* exprest. The work of the Spirit is exprest there by *Quickning from Death to Life*, it is also exprest by *Turning from Darknes to Light*. Now as to the latter, our Authors words are these: *The term of Darknes in this case is Metaphorical, and borrowed from that which is Natural.* As to the former, these: *There in is men a spiritual Death, called so Metaphorically, from the Analogie and proportion that it bears to Death Natural.* Let us see whether the Doctor's Argument will not *Unmetaphor* these expressions again. *If there be a secret mysterious work of the Spirit intended in these expressions, then they are not Metaphorical; if no such work be intended by them, then are the Scriptures obscure, beyond all other Writers.* If he can Answer his Argument for himself, he can Answer it for us too, and then *Regeneration* in particular will prove a Metaphorical expression; for if *Death* be so, then *Life* is so too, and being Born into that Life, will unavoidably be so likewise. *Some of the expressions of the Gospel concerning these matters, the Doctor allows to be Metaphorical; so that the controversie we have with him*

one would think should be, whether there be not more Metaphors than he allows; not as he pretends here, whether there be any Metaphors at all. But since he will have it so, he must not say hereafter, that he intended only to prove all the expressions of the Gospel were not Metaphorical, since his Argument concludes that they are all proper, if it concludes any thing. That *most* of them are *proper* we grant: and 'tis well, that it stands not in need of being proved by him; for his untoward way of proving, would tempt a man to suspect the *plainest truth* he meddles withal, if he had not better reasons of his own. For

Secondly, What consequence is there in this Arguing: If there be a secret mysterious work of the Spirit upon the Souls of men intended in the Scriptures, then are all the expressions of the Gospel concerning it *plain* and *proper*, otherwise the Scripture is obscure? For (1.) *None* of the expressions of it might have been *proper*, and yet *some* of them *plain*, and then the Scripture would not have been obscure in that thing; for a Figurative expression may be plain enough to be understood by a man of common sense. Sure our Author will grant, that saying of our Saviour, *This is my body*, to be *figurative*; and I hope he will not deny it to be *plain*, because it is figurative. So that his Argument, by which he concludes *all* the expressions of the Scripture, concerning this mysterious work to be proper, doth not prove that *any one* is so. (2.) If some of the expressions be both *plain* and *proper*, and others *figurative*, some whereof are *more* and some less plain, as the truth is; and if those which are *not so plain*, may be understood by the help of *plainer*; then may this *secret mysterious work* be sufficiently understood, by the expressions of it  
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in the Scripture, and consequently the Scripture far from being the obscurest Book in the world, because all the expressions of it are not to be taken properly and literally. But it seems our Author hath an opinion by himself, that no Writer *in the world* ever used the liberty of Metaphorical expressions.

Thirdly, his way of proving that there is such a mysterious work, is a mere begging of the Question. This we shall see by considering what he must mean by a *secret mysterious work*, viz. such a work of the Spirit, as is properly express'd by *Regenerating, Creating, Quickning, and Drawing* the Soul of a man; and this I grant to be a *very mysterious work*, if these be all *proper* expressions of it. Now he proves there is such a work, by this Argument, That otherwise the Scriptures are obscure. Why so? Because they are obscure if these be not proper expressions of the work of the Spirit; so that he proves there is a mysterious work, *i. e.* a work properly expressed by *Regeneration, Creation, &c.* by this Argument, that these are proper expressions of such a work; which is to prove a thing by it self: And he proves also that these are proper expressions, because there is such a mysterious work, that is, a work properly expressed by them; which is to beg the Question. So that if you will grant the Doctor, that they are *proper expressions*, he can then prove there is a *work properly expressed by them*; or if you will grant there is *such a work*, he can prove those to be *proper expressions*.

And now I understand the Doctor, when he saies, *The Difficulties which seem to be in these things, arise from their mysterious Nature, and not from any obscurity in the Declaration of them*; and I am fully  
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of his minde : for if any one tells me that a Body may be greater than it self, and lesser than it self, and that *Transubstantiation* may be true Doctrine ; or that a man may be properly *Regenerated, Created, Quickned, Drawn, and Awakened* all at once ; I grant he does not *obscurely declare* his minde to me, and that I finde *no difficulty to understand* the meaning of his words : But the *only difficulty which seems to be in these things* ariseth from the *mysterious nature*, or rather the nonsense of the things themselves contained under these plain expressions ; for the more plain any nonsense is, the more easily it is understood to be so.

This I think is a sufficient answer to that slender proof, which the Doctor brings for the judgement of his party, concerning the propriety of these Scripture-expressions ; but it will not be amiss to consider how he represents the judgement of those others whom he speaks of. For he saith,

#### SECT. 4.

*Others think the words and expressions of it to be mystical and figurative ; but the things intended to be ordinary and obvious to the natural Reason of every man.* So that if the Doctor may be believed, there are some who think the effects of the Holy Spirit upon our Hearts are not expressed by any proper words at all in the Scriptures ; but, as he saith, *they turn all Scripture-expressions of spiritual things into Metaphors.* If any such senseless people there be, they are, I should think, most likely to be found among those that separate from the Church of England ; for many of their Preachers,

chers, if we may judge of their Sermons by their Books, do so train them up to Metaphorical talking, that some of them may possibly believe the Scripture affords little or nothing else. But as for those who think the things intended by *these expressions*, suppose the assistances of the Divine Spirit, are ordinary and obvious to the natural Reason of every man; I never heard there were any such before, if by *obvious* the Doctor means *discoverable by mere natural Reason*; for the knowledge of these things is by all granted to depend on divine Revelation. But being *revealed*, I would fain know what *reason* we are to understand them withal besides our *natural Reason*. But if by *ordinary* and *obvious*, he means *plain* and *intelligible* by an *ordinary* capacity, I am one of those who think *the things* of the Gospel, whereof we are speaking, to be ordinary and obvious: and that they are not the *least*, but the *more excellent* for being so, our Author must grant, unless he will revoke his Argument, that the expressions of these things are not Metaphorical, taken from hence, that otherwise the Gospel is *dark* and *unintelligible*. So that we are both agreed in words at least, that Perspicuity and Intelligibleness is an excellent thing.

But the truth is, he and his Party have a notion of *Intelligibleness* and *Perspicuity* by themselves, as any one would guess by their Writings. For Example, the Doctor here tells us, that *if the Gospel intends nothing but moral Duties, and their observance in its Doctrine of Regeneration, then it is dark and unintelligible*. Now this is very strange; for (as it is confessed on all hands) moral Duties are easily intelligible, and if the Scripture intends no more by the *Doctrine of Regeneration* than the performance

performance of moral Duties, then is the Scripture very intelligible in the point of Regeneration : For that which is the meaning and intentment of the Scripture therein ( which the practice of moral Virtue is at present supposed to be ) is very plain and intelligible ; therefore I say the Gospel in this matter must be so too, in the judgement of all men but those who have been so long used to nonsense, that they reckon nothing *intelligible* but what they do *not* understand, and nothing *unintelligible* but what they *do*.

Possibly the Doctor will grant, that upon this Supposition, the Gospel is intelligible, to those who do understand this to be the meaning of *Regeneration* ; but he will pretend that it is *unintelligible* how these expressions of being *regenerate* and *created*, &c. should be Metaphorical expressions of being good and virtuous Christians. Some such thing he intimates within a few Lines after, in these words : *Others judge that under a grandeur of words and Hyperbolical expressions, things of a meaner and lower sence are intended, and to be understood.* So that our Author seems unable to understand how such *grand* and *lofty* Phrases, as being *Regenerated*, *Created*, and *Quickened from death*, should come to signify such a creeping attainment as that of being truly good and virtuous. Alas ! to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, and our Neighbour as our selves ; to follow the example of our Blessed Saviour, and to obey the commands of the Gospel uprightly and universally, these are but *things of a meaner and lower sence* ; and 'tis unintelligible how they should be intended by the *grandeur of such Hyperbolical expressions*, as *Regeneration*, and the new *Creation* are.

Tell



Tell us then, I pray, what be those things of a nobler and loftier sence than those which must be understood by these *grand* expressions. Forsooth, we are to understand the proper and literal significations of these expressions, *viz.* that men are properly created, born again, and raised from the dead, when they are qualified for the Kingdom of Heaven. These indeed are *lofty* things; but so unfit are they to be understood by those expressions, that they cannot be understood at all; and that we are not so to understand those Phrases, our Author hath implicitly confessed but two lines before, where he saith, that *all things are so expressed in the Scriptures with a condescension to our capacity, so as that there is still an inexpressible grandeur in many of them beyond our comprehension.* Now if the *mystery* of that work of the Spirit upon our Hearts, whereby we are fitted for Heaven, be so expressed by these Phrases, then let him mark what follows, *viz.*

1. That we are not required to understand these Phrases in their proper meaning; for as I have shewn, it is impossible they should be so understood, with the least congruity; therefore if the Scripture in any measure *condescends to our capacity* in using those expressions, the literal sence of them is not intended.

2. When the Scripture is said to condescend to our capacity, it is always by the use of Metaphors; thus God is said to have *Hands* and *Eyes*, and this *with condescension to our capacity*; but sure you will not say that we are to understand these expressions properly, but that by the *Hands* of God we are to understand his *power*, and by his *Eyes* his *knowledge*. Now if the Scripture con-

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descends to our capacity in representing the mentioned effects of God's Spirit, by *Regeneration, Creation, &c.* then by the same reason these are Metaphorical expressions too, by the using of which for the expressing of those effects, the Scripture *condescends to our capacity.*

Lastly, he saith that there is still in these things *an inexpressible grandeur beyond our comprehension.* If the grandeur of these things be expressed by a grandeur of words proper to the things, the grandeur of these things is not *inexpressible*, as he saith it is. The proper meaning also of being *born* and *raised from the dead*, he clearly comprehends, I suppose; how happens it then that the things properly meant by these words are beyond his comprehension? That it is *beyond his comprehension* or any mans else that the same person should in the proper sence be *Born, Created, and Raised from the dead*, all at once, I do not question, since it is sufficiently *incomprehensible* that contradictions may be true. But then they are the contradictions implied in the proper acceptation of these Phrases in our present case, which make the things incomprehensible: for set the contradictions aside, and you cannot deny the proper meaning of those words to be beyond your comprehension, *i. e.* you could as well comprehend what it is for the same man to be properly *Born, Created, Quickned, Awakened*, by the same numerical act, as what it is for the same man to be first *Created*, then *Born*, then *Quickned*, and the like. So that if our Author had marked the true reason why he might lawfully affirm the thing supposed to be properly express'd by these phrases, to be *beyond his comprehension*, he would have confessed it to be the *contradictions* implied in



in the supposition, that those phrases do properly express it. Had he therefore considered his own words, he had presently seen that his *sublime* nonsense is none of those *loftier things* that are to be understood by Regeneration.

I have been the longer in confuting this pretence of *these men*, that these Scripture-phrases are properly to be understood; because it is the foundation of those wilde Doctrines concerning *Grace*, and the *Operations* of the *Holy Spirit*, and the *manner* of *Conversion*, and the *nature* of *Holiness*, which they have introduced into Divinity. Were it not for their amusing the people with such discourses about *Regeneration*, and the *New Creature*, as if they were literally to be understood; it were as unlikely for them to perswade the meanest of their Hearers that no man can be converted till it is impossible for him to hinder it, that conversion is wrought in a moment, that before that moment comes the very best actions of men are sins, as it would be that the *Romanists* should cheat so many ignorant souls into the belief of *Transubstantiation*, had they not a weak pretence for that Doctrine, from the sound of those words *This is my Body*, which they contend are literally and not figuratively to be understood.

The people of both these parties are to be pitied, since they equally surrender up their understandings to their Guides, and receive their interpretations of Scripture without examining them. And then, out of reverence to the Scriptures themselves, which say *This is my Body*, and that we are *Born again*, and *Created*, and *Quickened*, &c. they come to believe nonsense, *i.e.* that these expressions are to be understood in their proper sence,



as their *Masters* teach them. But how they themselves can be excused, since I fear they cannot but be aware of the dishonour that is done to the Scriptures, and the mischief which may happen to the Souls of men by such an absurd use of Scripture-metaphors as that, I cannot understand. Some of them I think may take Sanctuary in that *Ignorance*, which will I hope make some abatement for the mistakes of the people; but as for the rest, they would do well to consider those dreadful words of our Lord, *Luke 17. 1, 2. It is impossible but that offences will come; but wo unto him through whom they come. It were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.*

#### SECT. 5.

I should come next to consider that Argument of the Doctor, which lies particularly against the supposal of *Regeneration* to be a Metaphorical expression of *reformation of Life* according to the Scriptures, which he takes to be his *Adversaries* notion of *Regeneration*: But it is fit their notion should be better understood than as 'tis lamely represented by him. Wherefore my next business shall be to state what I conceive to be the true meaning of *Regeneration*; which being done, I promise the Doctor not to forget his *Objection* against it.

The meaning of *being Regenerate* or *born again*, will be fully known, if we know what it signifies as a *State*, and what as an *Effect*. I shall first consider what is the meaning of *being Regenerate*,  
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as that phrase implies the *state* or *condition* of that man who is said to be Regenerate; and then I shall offer those reasons which make it evident, that that meaning is fit to be expressed by this *Metaphor*.

1. As Regeneration denotes a *State*, I affirm, that to be regenerate or born again, signifies in its utmost meaning *to become a sincere Profelyte, or Disciple of our Lord Jesus*. I shall first briefly shew what I mean by a sincere Disciple of *Christ*. Secondly, I shall prove that to be the meaning of a regenerate state.

To be a sincere Disciple of Jesus, consists in these two things. 1. In being *baptized*, as our Saviour requires. 2. In making good the profession of Baptism, which is to *believe in Christ*, and to *obey his Commands*. This is clearly answerable to that rule which our Blessed Saviour gave to his Apostles, according to which they were to make men his Disciples: *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. i. e. admitting them by Baptism into the Church, and thereby engaging them to believe, and to profess their Faith in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and of that Doctrine to which they have born record. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, i. e. and by the same Baptism engaging them to obey all my Commands*. That therefore which makes us sincere Disciples, is thus to believe, and obey, as we are by Baptism engaged to do.

Now because to obey the Commands of *Christ*, whatever we lose or suffer by it, is the clearest



proof we can give to our selves or others, that we own him in good earnest to be our *Lord and Master*, and that we do heartily believe him to be the *Son of God*; therefore we finde that our Saviour speaks of this obedience to him, as if it were the onely thing in which our being his true Disciples did consist. Thus *John 15. 8. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, that ye be fruitful in Piety and good works, so shall ye be my Disciples.* The same thing is affirmed of obedience to one, but that a very remarkable Precept of our Saviour, *John 13. 34. A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if you have love one to another. i. e. such love as Christ had to us.*

Now we are not to think that this *last saying* of our Saviour concerning that *one instance* of obedience to him, or that the *former* concerning obedience in *general*, do exclude either *the one* obedience to the rest of his Laws, or the *other* believing him to be *the Son of God*, from being necessary to make us his true Disciples. But that by such an high act of Vertue, as to love the Brethren as *Christ loved us*, it may strongly be concluded that we will not stick at any thing he requires of us; and that our yielding a sincere obedience to all his Commands does clearly suppose that we believe him to be the Son of God, and all his promises to be true. Hence our Saviour does not admit that we can be his Disciples, if we do not entirely submit our selves to him. *If any man come to me, and hate not his Father, &c. and his own life also, he cannot be my Disciple, i. e. unless he loves God, and Truth, and Goodness so much more than all his worldly Interests, even his Life*  
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it self, that he may be said to hate these things when his love to them is compared with his love to *Christ*, he cannot be a Disciple of *Christ*: He cannot be so, if he be not willing to part with all earthly things in obedience to *Christ*. The meaning is, he cannot be a *sincere Disciple*, he cannot answer the profession of Baptism, while it is thus with him. Thus are we taught to interpret those words by our Saviour himself in another place, *If ye continue in my word*, to do according to it whatever betides you for so doing in this world, *then are ye my Disciples indeed*, St. John 8. 31. So that the best notion we can frame of a true Disciple of *Christ*, and that to which we are guided by *Christ* himself, is this, that he is one who doth so firmly believe that *Jesus is the Son of God*, and that all his promises are true, as to love God above all things, and yield an hearty obedience to all the Commands of *Christ*. Now

Secondly, I am to prove, that the state of Regeneration means no more than to become such a Disciple of *Christ* as I have described; and my first Argument is this.

1. It is acknowledged that unless we be Regenerate we *cannot* see the Kingdom of God; and withal, that if we be Regenerate, we have thereby all that is *necessary* to qualifie us for his Kingdom. It is, I think, likewise acknowledged, that it is equally *necessary* and *sufficient* for that end, that we be the sincere Disciples of *Christ*. Let these things be granted, and I am much mistaken, if it does not follow, that to be Regenerate, and to be a sincere Disciple of *Christ*, are the same thing. If the latter be not readily granted, it is clearly proved from all those Scriptures which

suppose Faith and Obedience to be necessary and sufficient qualifications for eternal Happiness, such as these: *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned. Christ is the Author of salvation to them that obey him. He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not on the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. No unrighteous person shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. The righteous shall go into life eternal. And who is righteous? He that doth righteousness is righteous. Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will, &c. Matth. 7.24.* Thus coming to Christ is sometimes affirmed to be the condition of *having life* by him; and then by coming to Christ, nothing can be meant, but being his true Disciple, which in allusion to the Jewish Profelytism is called coming to him. *I am the bread of life, saith our Saviour; he that cometh to me, i. e. is my Disciple, shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*

Now is there any thing plainer in the Book of God, than that to be a sincere Disciple of Christ, i. e. to believe in him, so as to love him and obey his Commands, is that state or condition of a man, whereby he is, and onely is qualified for the Kingdom of Heaven? And if that be true, it follows by undeniable consequence, that Regeneration, and all those other Metaphors which express the state of a man qualified for eternal happiness, do signifie nothing else but his being such a Disciple of Christ, as to believe in him, to love him, and obey him. For if Regeneration signifies



fies any other state, then *first*, to believe in *Christ*, and to obey his Gospel, is not a *sufficient* Qualification for pardon of sin, and eternal happiness, contrary to all those clear Texts now mentioned; for besides this, that other state supposed to be meant by Regeneration would be *necessary*. And then *secondly*, (which is equally contrary to the Scripture) Faith and Obedience would not be so much as *necessary* to qualifie us for Salvation, since that other state, supposed to be meant by Regeneration, would be *sufficient* without them.

2. The state of a regenerate man is by St. *John* explained to be that of being such a Disciple of *Christ* as we have described. Thus he tells us, 1 *John* 5. 4, 5. *Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?* Here we have the full character of a true Disciple of *Christ*, viz. one who so believes that *Jesus* is the Son of God, that his Faith prevails against all worldly temptations, *the lust of the Flesh, the lust of the Eye, and the pride of Life*, and who therefore keeps the Commandments of God, not reckoning them to be grievous. For this is the reason given by St. *John*, why he that loves God keeps his Commandments; because he that is *born of God* overcometh the world. Thus also, *vers. 1. Whoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.* This is the state of Regeneration, to believe that *Jesus* is the *Christ*, with such a faith as implies obedience; which is afterwards expressly added in those terms of *keeping Gods Commandments, and overcoming the world.* Again, *Chap. 2. 29. If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doth*



doth righteousness is born of him. And in the next Chapter, *vers.* 9. we finde that every one that is born of him doth righteousness. *Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God,* i. e. such is the state and temper of his Minde, such is the disposition of his Will and Affections, that he doth not sin; but his Life is agreeable to the Laws of God, *for his seed remaineth in him;* for the Word of God, that divine Seed (so called, *Matth.* 13. 19. *1 Pet.* 1.) hath wrought its due and proper effects upon his soul by its precepts and motives; for where this seed is received into a good and honest heart, it will grow into good fruits, and be an effectual principle of obedience, and a holy life. Wherefore the Apostle addes, *and he cannot sin,* i. e. it is not onely true of him that he abstains from sin, but it is contrary to the *genius* and the sense of his soul to sin. It is not the consideration of worldly Interests; it is not the want of Temptation and opportunity that keeps him at any time from offending God, so much as the sense of his duty to God, his love of Virtue, and the conformity of his Minde to the Laws of God; which so long as they continue, are principles which will carry a man through the whole circle of holiness and vertue. Thus we use to say of a meek-spirited man, that he cannot be furious; and of an honest man, that he cannot deceive; and of a generous man, that he cannot do a base or unworthy action. By which words we do not mean that it is *absolutely*, but *morally* impossible that he should, it being directly contrary to the frame and the temper of his minde so to do. And such is the state of him who is born of God; and it is well expressed in those words of *Joseph*, *How can I do this great wicked-*  
*ness,*

ness, and sin against God? He cannot sin, i. e. the reason why he doth not sin, is because it is abominable to him so to do, and repugnant to the bent and inclination of his nature; which being Holy and Divine, will therefore produce a correspondent, i. e. a godly and vertuous Life.

So apparently false is that Doctrine, that although a man, who hath been once regenerated, fall into foul and abominable offences, yet the Seed of God, and the Root of the Matter, and true Grace remains in him still: For the Apostle saith, *He that is born of God sinneth not, because the seed of God remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.* How should this be a reason why he cannot sin, viz. that the Seed of God remains in him, that he is born of God, if he may be guilty of notorious and wilful sins, and yet that Seed remain, and he be regenerate still?

Thus have I proved out of the holy Scripture, that by a state of Regeneration, the Scripture means no more than being a sincere Disciple and Follower of our Lord Jesus.

## SECT. 6.

I must now tell Dr. Owen that he hath not done fairly, to represent the opinion of his Adversaries, concerning the state of Regeneration, as if they believed it consisted onely in a *Reformation of Life*, excluding a real change in the Soul. And this is the best artifice he hath wherewith to delude his Reader into an ill opinion of them, viz. to state their opinions falsely, and then to fasten odious names upon them, as he doth frequently in his Book.

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Thus he tells us, *We*, meaning himself and his followers, *say and believe that Regeneration doth consist in Spirituali Renovatione Naturæ, a Spiritual Renovation of our Nature. Our modern Socinians, that it doth so in Morali Reformatione Vitæ, a moral Reformation of Life.* What other *Socinians* our Author hath found out, besides the *modern*, I know not: but here he calumniates us and the *Socinians* too. Though the *Socinians* deserve rebuke, yet they are not to have lies told of them; for not onely we who are no *Socinians*, but those that are, do acknowledge the state of a regenerate man to consist in the spiritual renovation of his Nature,

Whereas therefore he tells us, *If they will grant that this moral reformation of Life, doth proceed from a spiritual renovation of our Nature, this difference will be at an end;* I answer him, that *this difference is at an end* before 'tis begun. For we have always granted it; and as I shall shew him presently, he knew it too: Onely our Author was willing to impose the fallacy of *Non causa pro causa* upon his Readers: and to gain the better opinion of his endeavours in this Chapter, he would make them believe that his designe is indeed to prove that there is a change of the Heart as well as of the Life in a regenerate man. Now this is not the thing he had to prove against us, however he shifts the Question here, that (to use his own words) *he might take an opportunity to rail at others for want of better advantage.* His business was to prove that *Regeneration* and the *new Creation* are to be understood properly; and (as he knows) a foundation was hereby to be laid of affirming that we cannot be regenerated without the interposal of an irresistible power, like to that



that whereby the world was made, and the dead shall be raised. Here lies the difference between him and us, not whether Regeneration implies a change of the Soul as well as of the Life. And this he confesseth himself in the very next Page, Sect. 20, where he saith, *Some say a new Creature is no more but a changed Man; it is true: but then this change is internal also; yes, in the Purposes, Designs, and Inclinations of the minde. But is it by a real infusion of a new Principle of spiritual Life and Holiness? No, it denotes no more but a new course of Conversation; onely the expression is Metaphorical: A new Creature is a moral Man that hath changed his course or way.* Now under that new course of Conversation, which he saies some mean by Regeneration, either he includes an internal change, as their meaning too, or not. If he does, then he confesseth their true meaning, and the difference is at an end: If not, then he either wants a good Conscience or a good Memory; for he granted before, that they confessed *an internal change* also. As to what he addes, that they deny the *real infusion of a new Principle of spiritual Life and Holiness*; I say, they do not deny a new Principle of Holiness to be in the Regenerate: for they confess the *Seed of God*, that is, the Word of God to be in them; the Precepts and Motives whereof prevailing in their mindes, are properly a principle of Holiness of Life in them. Now whether this Principle be *really infused into them* or not, belongs not to this place to consider, where we are treating about the state of Regeneration, and not the manner whereby the Holy Spirit doth regenerate us. Whereas he saith, that *the new Creature according to them is a moral man that hath changed his course or way*, he ought not to blame them for it, since the change of the Heart is supposed in that of the Life. He  
 knows

knows there is no better way to judge of the *Tree* than by the *Fruits*; of the temper of the *Minde*, than by the constant course of the *Life*; and therefore we should conclude, it is a very honest account which they give of the *new Creature*, because it will not suffer a man to reckon himself regenerate who doth not sincerely amend his *Life* according to God's holy Word; which is a good way to keep Hypocrites from pretending too fast to *Regeneration*, who might else be comforting themselves that their *hearts* are good, while their *lives* and *manners* are naught. I am sure their description of the *regenerate state* is agreeable to what St. *John* saith of it, *He that doth righteousness is born of God.*

But after all, I thus far differ from him, that I took upon his distinction between *Spiritual* and *Moral* to be vain and useless in the description of a *regenerate state*, or of *Regeneration* ( which is his own phrase ) as *passively considered*. For as the moral reformation of *Life*, which he speaks of, is *spiritual*; so the spiritual renovation of our Nature is *moral*: For as the state of a regenerate man, in both respects, may be called *spiritual*, as being caused by the grace of the divine Spirit; so in both it may be called *moral*, as consisting in the purity both of *Heart* and *Life*, and the conformity of our *Mindes* and *Actions* to the divine Laws. For I suppose he will grant that all sin, i. e. all unbelief of God's Word, and all disobedience to Gods Commands, whether *moral* or *positive*, is *Immorality*. Therefore faith in God, and obedience to his Will, is *Morality*, or *moral goodness*, i. e. they are things good in their own nature, eternally and unalterably so. This man chargeth his Adversaries here with *confused notions*, and *Sophistical expressions* about

bout Morality ; where he doth not tell the Reader one of their notions or expressions about it ; and therein he hath done more like a *Sophister* himself than a Doctor.

'Tis in this Latitude, which I have told you, that they understand moral Righteousness and Virtue, who affirm that the state of a regenerate man doth consist therein ; and that there is no difference between *Grace* and *Virtue*, between *Spiritual* and *Moral*, supposing that by *Grace* and *Spiritual* you express not the cause, but the state of Regeneration. If Dr. Owen does not take them in this sense, he misunderstands them, and makes a wrong report of their judgement, concerning the sufficiency of moral Righteousness to qualify men for Heaven. If he does thus understand them, and yet is angry because they make no distinction between *Grace* and *Virtue*, a *spiritual* and *moral* state, as I finde he is, *Secl.* 19. sure it must be because he thinks all is not moral Virtue which they say is, *viz.* faith in God, and universal obedience to his Will ; and then the contention between us is a mere *λογμαχία*, a strife about words, in which I suppose he has the hardest part, unless he can shew, that to disbelieve any of the Revelations, and to disobey any of the Commands of God, are not Immoralities. Or else the reason of his displeasure must be, because he thinks a regenerate state doth not consist in Faith and Obedience ; which, if I understand him, is his opinion ; and 'tis our affirming the contrary which hath made him so fierce against us, as I observe him to be, *Secl.* 17. where he hath these strange words ; *Re-* Pag. 183.

*generation doth not consist in a moral reformation of Life and Conversation ; let us suppose such a reformation to be extended to all known instances. Suppose*



pose a man be changed from Sensuality unto Temperance; from Rapine to Righteousness; from Pride and the dominion of irregular Passions unto Humility and Moderation; with all instances of the like nature which we can imagine, or are prescribed in the rules of the strictest Moralists. Suppose this change be laboured, exact, and accurate, and so of great use in the world. Suppose also that a man hath been brought and persuaded unto it through the preaching of the Gospel, so escaping the pollutions that are in the world through Lust, even by the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, or the directions of his Doctrine delivered in the Gospel; yet, I say, *ALL* this, and *ALL* this added unto Baptism, accompanied with a profession of Faith and Repentance, is *NOT* REGENERATION, nor do they comprise it in them.

Is not *ALL* this Regeneration? Not a change from sin in all known instances? not a change to Virtue in all instances which we can imagine, or are prescribed by the strictest Moralists, not excepting our Saviour himself? not to escape the pollutions that are in the world through Lust, and to be persuaded hereunto through the faith of the Gospel? What do these men make of Regeneration? Where is that reverence which they pretend to have for the Word of God, which they do thus openly and notoriously contradict? Was it not true which I said, that our difference with these men is this, that we affirm Regeneration to consist in the faith and obedience of the Gospel, and they deny it? But let us hear Gods Word once more concerning this matter: St. John saith, *He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ, so believes it as to overcome the world, is born of God.* Now does not this man contradict St. John, when he saith, *Though*

a man hath escaped the pollutions that are in the world through Lust, even by the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, he is yet not born of God. St. John saith, *We know that every one that doth righteousness is born of God*: But quite contrary saith our Author; *Let a man be changed from Sensuality to Temperance, from Rapine to Righteousness, with all instances of the like nature which we can imagine, he may yet not be born of God*. Doctor, I challenge you here before your own Party, and the world, of contradicting the plain and express words of God, and that in a matter of the highest moment to us, wherein the eternal salvation of mens Souls is most nearly concerned; which is enough to provoke the indignation of all good men against you.

Let us again suppose a man in that state which our Author hath well described, but *unchristianly* reprobated; and then I demand, *what lacketh he yet besides perseverance in that state?* Not to tarry for the Doctor's Answer, I shall prove from the words of our Blessed Saviour that he lacketh nothing else. A certain Ruler asked our Saviour, *What shall I do to inherit eternal life?* Luke 18. 18. And Jesus said unto him, *Thou knowest the Commandments, Do no commit adultery, &c.* And he said, *All these have I kept from my youth*. Jesus answered, *Yet lackest thou one thing; sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me*.

The Ruler then wanted nothing but a willing minde to part with his Estate when God required it, and to become a follower of Jesus; for had he done this, we have our Saviour's word for it, he should have had treasure in Heaven, which none

but the Renegate shall have. But our Authors *moral* man wants none of those Qualifications which this *Ruler* either had or wanted, that were necessary in order to his *inberiting eternal life*; he wants none of them which the other had, being changed from Sin to Virtue in *all instances*; he wants none of them which he lacked; for he is a *follower of Christ*, *baptized*, professing Faith and Repentance; and he is changed from Covetousness too, which is *one known instance* of sin, to a readiness of yielding up his Estate when God will have him do it, which we may easily *imagine to be an instance of Virtue*. Therefore the Doctor reprobates him whom *Christ* chuseth, he condemneth him whom God justifieth.

It is the great discouragement which this *Doctrine* gives to true goodness, and the dishonour which this *Writer* doth to the Gospel, by pretending himself a Christian, which makes it needful to prove these plain things against him.

## SECT. 7.

P. 181.

Let him not think that he hath made himself whole, by adding these words at last: *Whatsoever there may be of actual Righteousness in these things, they do not express an inherent habitual Righteousness*. For this will not serve his turn; since, 1. Here he does no more than give a reason, the best he has, why he contradicts the Apostle, who saith, *He that doth righteousness is born of God*, by saying that *he is not born of God*. But then, 2. His reason here is as false as his *Doctrine*, and as contrary to Scripture. Our Saviour saith, *An evil tree cannot bring forth good fruits*; but he hath the face to say that



that it *can*: for he saith that a man who is not inherently and habitually righteous, may bring forth all these good fruits, even *all instances* of reformation of Life which *can be imagined*. St. Paul likewise saith, that *the carnal minde is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be*. And that you may not think, that subjection to the Law of God, which consists in universal amendment of Life, not here to be meant; observe that in the same Chapter, Rom. 8. he saith, *There is no condemnation to them that walk after the Spirit; and if ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, ye shall live*. So that if the carnal minde can be so far subject to the Law of God, as that the carnal man may *walk after the Spirit*, and *mortifie the deeds of the body by the Spirit*, then it is possible for a carnal man, so continuing, to be saved; which again contradicts the Apostle, who saith, that *to be carnally minded is death*. But now our Author's Doctrine is this, that the carnal man while he is such, *viz.* one who wants *inherent habitual Righteousness*, who is not regenerate, may be subject to the Law of God, and may mortifie the deeds of the body; for he saith, all that actual righteousness which he had before described, and which does unavoidably imply mortifying the deeds of the body, and walking uprightly according to the Gospel, does *not express an inherent habitual righteousness*, which is the same with being spiritually minded. And does not he contradict the holy Apostle by so saying?

I know not what he can possibly say to save himself from this charge of contradicting the Apostle, but that his meaning is not that the carnal man can mortifie the deeds of the body,

by the Spirit, and that he can walk *after the Spirit*, i. e. that he reforms himself thus universally, as he is supposed to do, *by the Spirit*; but onely that he may be such a reformed man, that he may mortifie the deeds of the body, that he may walk according to the rules of the Gospel; and yet all this proceeds from the *Old Nature*, and this work belongs but to the *old Creation*. And this I finde indeed to be his sence; for he tells us, *Whatever is in the Soul of Power, Disposition, or Ability, or Inclination unto God, or for any moral action by nature, i. e. before regenerating Grace comes, it belongs unto the old Creation, it is no new Creature*. Now by comparing these words with his 17 Section, we may now discern, that by the inherent habitual righteousness, which the *moral man* wants as he saith, he does not mean an *internal disposition and inclination to Virtue*, correspondent to that righteousness which he practiseth in his life; for he supposeth that in the state of *Nature or Unregeneracy*, such a disposition and inclination, such a power and ability he may have: But he means by it, a *principle of spiritual life and holiness infused by the Holy Spirit*, as he explains himself afterward. So that this is the defence he must make for himself out of his Book, when I charge him with contradicting St. Paul, viz. that he onely saith, the carnal man may mortifie the deeds of the body, may be universally righteous and obedient in his life; but this is no more than a natural work all this while; all his actual righteousness, and his internal disposition to it, *belongs unto the old Creation, it is no new Creature*; whereas the spiritually-minded man, of whom St. Paul saith, that he walks after the Gospel, *walks after the Spirit too*; and when he mortifies the deeds of the body, does mortifie them *by the Spirit*.

This pretence, so derogatory from the grace of the Holy Spirit, contradicts the Scripture, which saith, *He that doth righteousness is born of God.* I shall now onely observe, that our Author, whatever he pretends to the contrary, is discovered to be a rank *Pelagian*. I speak it with great seriousness; for the thing is plain, and he cannot with any modesty now deny it.

He makes it possible for a man to *mortifie the deeds of the body without the Spirit*; and to walk after the Gospel, though he be *not led by the Spirit*; to keep the commands of God by the mere abilities of *Nature*; to be universally righteous in his *life*, and to be disposed and inclined thereunto in his *Soul*, without an *infusion* (as his phrase is) of a *new principle of spiritual life and holiness*. And he plainly supposeth, that all that righteousness which the Gospel requires, *viz.* an universal performance of God's commands, proceeding from the belief of the Gospel, may belong unto the *old Creation*, and be no *new Creature*, nor the work of the Spirit.

Now *Pelagius* his great Heresie was this; *That a man by his natural Faculties might do that which God required, without any further help from God, than that of declaring his will.* For, setting that aside, he thought our willing and doing needed no divine assistance, as *St. Austin* reports him; and that God gave us the power of *choice* in vain, if we cannot do his will, unless he always helpeth us, as *St. Hierom* saith concerning him. It is the same which the Doctor saith, while he makes all the righteousness and disposition thereunto which we have been considering, even that of the faith and obedience of the Gospel, to be the effect of

August. Lib.  
de Gratia  
Christi. c. 41.

Hierom. Ep.  
ad Cresiph.



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*nature, and to belong unto the old Creation, so that a man may believe the Gospel, and keep the Commandments of God, without the renewing grace of the Holy Spirit.* If the Doctor saith, that however in all the Regenerate he ascribes that righteousness to the Holy Spirit, and his Grace; this will not bring him off: For *Pelagius* himself was brought to confess, though not the same thing, yet what would serve his turn, as well as this can the Doctor's. For at length he said, *Therefore is the Grace of God given, that what we are able to do by Nature, we may more easily do by Grace.* But the Doctrine of the Catholick Church was, that *Grace is necessary* to our doing the Will of God; and if that be true, it does equally conclude both him and *Pelagius* to be the same Hereticks, though he saith doing the Will of God is *sometimes* the effect of the gracious Aids of the Spirit; and *Pelagius* said, doing it more easily was *always* so.

Our Author, I confess, speaks divers things in this Book which destroy this *Pelagian* Doctrine; for he is sometimes in the humour of a *Manichee*, which is an Heresie of the other extream, and will not allow that a man can do any good action whatsoever, without an *irresistible determination* of his Will thereunto, as in due place I shall put him in minde again. How he came by the knack of believing such inconsistent things, if he believes them, I know not; but he makes great use of his *Talent* that way, as I shall have further occasion to shew him hereafter.

But whether he believes these Contradictions or not, as long as he asserts *Pelagian* Doctrines, he is to be judged from his own words, and to go  
for



for a *Pelagian*. I grant that the sence of what a man saith in one part of a Book, is to be judged of by what he saith in another; but that always is upon supposition, that his words are capable of that sence, which is that way endeavoured to be put upon them. But our Author's arguing in *Señ. 17.* compared with *Señ. 20.* is in my judgement so notoriously for the *Pelagian* Heresie, that if *Pelagius* himself were here, we could not discern the least difference between them, in the point of man's natural ability to keep the Commandments of God. Indeed he gives the *Pelagians* ill words enough in many places of his Book; and he would perswade his Reader that his Adversaries are a kinde of *Pelagian* Hereticks; but, for ought I see, he is more angry at the name of *Pelagius* than at his *error*; or he hopes that he may unsuspectedly broach the opinions of *Pelagius*, while he falls foul upon other men as if they were his followers. And truely this insincerity he might happily learn from *Pelagius* himself, who was wont to *say*, and *unsay*, to contradict his own *Concessions* one while, and his *Affertions* another, when he was to save himself now against the *Catholicks*, and then against his *own Party*, as *St. Augustin* tells us: which being considered, I leave it to others to judge whether our Author is not to be esteemed a *Pelagian*, though he elsewhere affirms things inconsistent with *Pelagianisme*. I believe he has but one way to come off, and that is to renounce the Doctrine here by him maintained, viz. *That a man may do Righteousness without the renovation of the Spirit, or without being born of God;* and then he must say with the Apostle, that *He that doth righteousness is born of God;* which is one of those Arguments whereby I have proved, that a state of Regeneration is a state of inherent

De pecc.  
Orig. c. 17,  
18, &c.

personal Righteousness, and which, together with the rest I have produced, does prove, that to be *Regenerate*, as it signifies the state of a man, is no other thing than to be a sincere Disciple of *Christ*, to believe and obey the Gospel of our Blessed Saviour; which was the first thing to be shewn,

## SECT. 8.

2. If we consider Regeneration as an effect, we are to enquire into the causes and means of that state which we have described Regeneration to be. These our Saviour affirms to be *Water*, and the *Spirit*, verſ. 5. viz. when he repeated his Doctrine to *Nicodemus*: Concerning which *Grotius* well notes: *Exponit jam qualem nativitatem intelligat, nè Nicodemus diutius Allegoricæ locutionis ignorantia fallatur.* Our Saviour now explains what Birth he understood, that *Nicodemus* might no longer be deceived by his ignorance that *Christ* spake figuratively: For after it was told him that this Birth was effected by *Water* and the *Spirit*, he could not dream that our Saviour meant *being born again*, in the literal and proper sence, as he conceived at first, when it was onely told him, *Except a man be born again he cannot, &c.*

Now whether one cause of the state of Regeneration, or more, be expressed in these words by *Water* and the *Spirit*, is not generally agreed upon; there being some, whereof *Grotius* himself is one, who conceive that by an *in dñi dñi*, those words signify the *sanctifying* or *cleansing Spirit* of God. *Non loquitur de Baptismo*, saith *Grotius*; but withal he saith, *Sed locutiones sunt alludentes ad Baptismum*; our Saviour alludes to Baptism, as he supposeth him to allude to the *Eucharist* in those words;  
*Except*

Except ye eat the *Flesh*, and drink the *Blood*, &c. But by the leave of so great a man, I think the other opinion more generally received, and in particular maintained by Dr. Hammond, viz. that by *Water Baptism* is here meant, to be ( to say no more ) far more probable than the supposition of the *in Suo Sui*, and that for these two reasons, 1. Because Baptism was that ceremony of Profelytism among the Jews, which our Saviour borrowed from them. To be born of Water was no new Name or Notion, as Dr. Owen pretends; for the Jews called their Profelytes *Recens nati*, ( as Grotius himself observes ) *new Born men*, and as such counted them to have quitted their Relation to their former Country, Parents, and Kindred: and since the *Jewish Profelyte* was βαπτιστός, a baptized person, and the טבילה or immersion in Water, was one of the indispensable ceremonies of his Profelytism, or Regeneration; we may well conceive that by being born of Water, our Saviour meant becoming a *Profelyte* to his Church by Baptism, as by Baptism the Jews admitted Profelytes to theirs; for otherwise it would not have been so strange that *Nicodemus* a Master of *Israel* should not understand what our Saviour meant by being born of Water. 2. St. Paul does expressly call Baptism the *laver of Regeneration*; which what it signifies but a means whereby we are regenerated, or become the Disciples of Christ, I cannot understand; and then that is the very same with being born of Water. Now where there is not only no necessity to finde a figure in Scripture-phrases, but the proper sence also contains a truth very pertinent to the Subject spoken of, in all reason there the proper sence ( and consequently here of the word *Water* ) ought to be followed. And then being born of Water signifies our

Vid. Dr.  
Hammond  
in loc. & re-  
sol. of 6  
Quæst.



our being admitted into the Church as the Disciples of Christ, and engaged to be so for the future by *Baptism*.

To be *born* of the *Spirit*, is to be made the sincere Disciples of Christ, and true to the profession of Baptism by the Operations of the Holy Spirit; and what the Scripture teacheth us concerning them, is the main designe of this Treatise to shew; therefore I shall say no more of them in this place; but onely adde, that we are not to understand the *Spirit of God* to be the immediate cause of our Regeneration, or becoming good Christians; but we are to suppose those other Causes, *viz.* those means which the Scripture ascribes our Regeneration unto, to be included under *the Spirit*, who is indeed the principal cause of this effect, without whose operations those means cannot be effectual to their end. And these are the Doctrines of the Gospel: For St. Peter tells us, 1 Pet. 1. 23. *That we are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.* But this shall be more fully considered when I come to speak of the manner of those Operations of the Holy Spirit whereby we are born again.

And thus have I given you an account of the true meaning of being Born again, both as it signifies a *State*, and as an *Effect*; and the sum of all is this: That our Saviour doth require us to become his sincere Followers and Disciples, if we hope to see the Kingdom of God.

## SECT. 9.

I come now to shew the Reasons, why our becoming

becoming the sincere Disciples of *Jesus*, is exprest by being born again. And I shall likewise shew how fitly the same thing is exprest by the other Metaphors that are used in the Scripture for that purpose; and this, because our Author seems unable to conceive how so mean a thing as to *believe* and *obey* the Gospel of *Christ*, should be intended by such *grand and Hyperbolical expressions*, as those of the *new Birth*, the *new Creature*, &c. I shall first observe the similitude between our becoming true Christians, and *being Born*.

First, the greatness of that *alteration* which is made in a man's state, by his becoming a sincere Disciple of *Jesus*, is one good reason why the state of such a Disciple is exprest by this *Metaphor*; for it expresth a very great change. Thus Mr. *Baxter* tells us very well, that *Regeneration* is a *Metaphorical term*, taken from our natural *Generation*, because there is so great a change, that a man is as it were another man. If we consider how great this change is, we shall finde it so to be. There is first of all an *Intrinsick* change, peculiar to the state of adult Christians, their understandings being informed with the knowledge of those truths concerning God and themselves, and a Life to come, which they are most of all concerned to know, which is the excellency of the knowledge of *Jesus Christ*. Hereby also is produced a proportionable change in their Wills and Affections, which the belief of the Gospel hath wrought such effects upon, that from being addicted to sensuality and worldliness, they are come to love God with all their Hearts, and to be strongly inclined to Holiness and Virtue. This likewise produceth a suitable change in their lives, which now are led, not according to the lusts of the

Treat. of  
Conv. p. 8.

the Flesh, and the examples of evil Men; but the Laws of God, and the Example of *Christ*. And thus we come to the true use of all our *Faculties*, as an Infant after it is born falls into those natural motions which are hindred by its imprisonment in the Womb. Now when our mindes are thus purified from sin, when *the Spirit that was in Christ is in us*, and our bodies and souls are become the Instruments of Righteousness; there follows a *Relative* change in our state as considerable as the other: For then are we the Sons of God, Heirs with Christ, Brethren to God's Children in heaven and on earth; we are of kin to the Family of God, we enjoy his Favour and Blessing, and have an actual right to *that promise which he hath promised*, even *eternal life*. Lay all these things together, and nothing will be more evident to you than this, that so great a change of our state is implied in our being the true Disciples of *Christ*, that we are as it were other men by being so, and so may fitly be said to be *Born again* when we become such persons.

But that *Intrinsic* alteration which seems to afford the clearest Similitude, regards that *sense of good and evil*, which is proper to a true Christian. We know that all living Creatures have such a sense of things hurtful and destructive to them, that they are thereby generally prompted to avoid them. 'Tis thus, I say, in the *natural life* that we readily apprehend what is contrary to it; and therefore we do not run into the Fire, nor venture down Precipices, because these things are contrary and destructive to our Natures. And this is a very fit *Emblem* of the state of a true Christian; for by reason of that divine temper of Soul, which is wrought in him by the Holy Spirit, he hath  
such



such a like sense of *good* and *evil*, with regard to his *Minde* and *Conscience*, as all living Creatures have with respect to their *Natures*. He therefore that is in *Christ*, i. e. who is a true Christian, is said to be Born again, and to become a new Creature; for he hath a new sense of things which he had not before; he hath other apprehensions of sin than sensual and worldly men have: he looks not upon any immorality as a harmless thing; but apprehends all kindes of wickedness to be what they are, pernicious and detestable; which is the reason (as I have already intimated) of what St. *John* saith, *He that is born of God sinneth not.*

In like manner, that which in the *Relative* change seems to be most visibly intended by this Metaphor, is our being qualified to enter into the Kingdom of God, which is the *Inheritance* of the Saints, or the true Disciples of *Christ*: for by becoming his Disciples, we are as it were *born* to this *Inheritance*, we are the *Sons* of *God*; and if *Sons*, then *Heirs*, as the Apostle tells us.

Now if faith in *Christ*, and obedience to his Laws, make men so much better, and more excellent persons than they were before, and qualifie them also for an everlasting reward; then here is another visible reason for the choice of this Metaphor to express the state of a good Christian by, *viz.* the great advantages they gain by it; we have as it were a new being given unto us when we truly believe in *Jesus*, and conform our selves to his Doctrine and Example; we are so much altered for the better, as if we had never lived till then; and we have infinitely more reason to think of this alteration in our state, than to re-  
member

member the *day* of our *Birth* with joy and gladness. Hence we finde that the Scripture does not onely represent the advantages we gain by the Gospel of our Saviour, under Metaphors taken from things most grateful to our natural Appetites, as *Liberty*, *Life*, and *Light*; but withal it assures us, that the *good* implied in those things, does in a more eminent manner belong to the true Disciples of *Christ* than to any body else; as when our Saviour saith, *Joh. 8. 36. If the Son shall make you free, then are you free indeed.* Now what this freedom is, we are told, *vers. 32. The truth shall make you free*; and *vers. 34. He that committeth sin is the servant of sin.* So that this freedom consisteth in the knowledge of the Truth, and in obedience to the Laws of God; which is that very state that the Scripture elsewhere calls *Light*, and *Life*, and being *Born again*, and *created in Christ Jesus*.

Lasty, Since it is by the *Operations* of the *Holy Spirit* in us that we become true believers and good men, it is visible that our being then said to be *born* of God, does fitly express the concurrence of that Divine power whereby this change is effected in us.

There are other *Metaphors* whereby the Scripture expresseth the same thing; but none of them seem to be so full of signification as *this*; although the use and meaning of all of them is easily discernible. Those expressions of *Creating* and *Drawing* seem principally to respect that *divine Grace*, by which we are enabled to *overcome the world*, and to *live to God*. *Converting* or *Turning*, peculiarly notes that alteration that is hereby made in our state. *Taking away the Heart of stone,*

stone, expresseth the same thing; but chiefly with regard to what we *were before*, as *giving the Heart of flesh* also doth, with respect to what we *become afterward*. *Making a new Heart*, and a *new Spirit*, signifies that change which is wrought in the Dispositions of the *Minde*, as *causing us to walk in God's Statutes* notes the reformation that is made in the *life*. *Purifying, Cleansing, and Purgings*, are Metaphors that express the excellency of this change, and how much our Natures are bettered by it. But *Quickning*, and *making Free*, and *turning from darkness to light*, do express *all the advantages* which we gain by the Faith and Obedience of the Gospel, whether they be *Inherent* or *Relative*. And this may serve to shew in what divers respects these *Metaphors* conspire to express the same thing: But you may observe that the Metaphor of *Regeneration*, or the *new Birth* contains all those Similitudes to the state of a true Christian which are severally discernible in the rest. And this probably is the reason why it is more frequently used in the *Scriptures* than the rest are, as that is the reason I suppose why it hath obtained amongst Christian writers to treat of the conditions of eternal Life more frequently under the name of *Regeneration*, than under any other phrase whereby they are *Metaphorically* expressed. And possibly this *common use* of the word, may have been an occasion to some unwary Christians of imagining that it is to be understood in the *proper* sense. But I do not see how so learned a man as *Dr. Owen* can excuse himself from dishonesty for making this *construction* of it, which must appear ridiculous to any considering man. However, I hope, the Reader will acknowledge that I have given a plain and reasonable account of the use of these *Metaphors*, by shewing whertin the Similitude



litude lies between the *proper* and *figurative* significations of them. And hereby I may have helped our Author to conceive it a very possible thing, that the Scriptures mean nothing more by those *grand and Hyperbolical expressions* (as he calls them) of being *Regenerate*, &c. then becoming a sincere Disciple of *Christ*, which is his Adversary's notion of a *Regenerate* man. Thus also I have shewn how far we may argue from these *Scripture-metaphors*; If any man can go further, and finde out more Similitudes between the *Metaphors* and that which is meant by them, I shall not be his Adversary, provided he keeps himself within the bounds of *Sense* and *Reason*. But to argue from the proper signification of any one or all these *Metaphors*, to conclude something parallel in the state of a Believer to every thing which can properly be affirmed of them, is to run upon such wilde and absurd consequences, as any wise man would be asham'd to own, and any good man would be afraid to fasten upon the Scriptures. How our *Author* argues from them, we shall see hereafter. In the mean time we have proceeded thus far, as to state the true notion of *Regeneration*.

## SECT. 10.

Though I have, as I conceive, sufficiently proved, that to be *born again* is to become a true Disciple of *Christ*; yet for further confirmation, and because it may be of some use to the ordinary Reader, I shall make it plain, that this notion is agreeable to the scope and designe of our Saviour's discourse to *Nicodemus*, *Joh. 3.* which is the most famous place in the whole New Testament, where

where this phrase is used. It is one of the best ways of interpreting any difficult passage in Divine or Humane Authors, to observe the designe of that whole discourse to which it belongs; and then to fix such a meaning upon that passage as is apparently suitable to the scope of the Author, if the words will bear that meaning. That the *Phrase* of *being Regenerate* will bear that sense which I have assigned to it, I have shewn; and that it is the true sense thereof, I have proved by clear Arguments from other Scriptures: wherefore, if I shew also that this sense of the *Phrase* is consonant to the plain scope of our Saviour in that *discourse*, where he made the *first mention* of it that we read of, nothing can be further desired to demonstrate that this indeed is the *true meaning* thereof.

The *designe* of our Saviour's discourse may easily be gathered from the *plain* passages of it, and then it will appear to be this. 1. To shew that faith in *Christ*, and obedience to him, were the means by which God had appointed to bring men to eternal Happiness. 2. To shew the unreasonableness of the *Jews*, who would not believe in him.

The former we finde, *vers. 16. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life; i. e.* this is the way by which God hath determined to save Mankind, *viz.* by faith in his Son, who was to be *lifted up* upon the Cross, *as Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness*, a rude Salvage place, and so fit to be the figure of that corrupt state of the World in which Christ came to die for us, that *whosoever*

L believed

*believed in him should not perish, but, &c. vers. 14, 15.* Now this was so great a demonstration of God's Love to man, thus to give his *only begotten Son*, that no man could hope to escape the anger of God who should refuse the benefit of this *Sacrifice*: For though indeed God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved, *vers. 17.* yet he that believeth not is condemned already, *vers. 18.* is in a state to which condemnation belongs; and that a more severe one, for refusing so gracious an opportunity of Salvation as was now offered.

2. Our Saviour shews the *unreasonableness* of those men that believed not, and that by noting  
 1. The *Evidence* of that Truth which they disbelieved. 2. The true cause of their unbelief. The former he admonished *Nicodemus* of in these words, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our testimony, vers. 11. i. e.* "Ye believe not my  
 " Doctrine concerning that onely way, by which  
 " you must come to see the Kingdom of God, al-  
 " though it be evidently true; for this is that  
 " very Message which I bring you from God;  
 " this is that Counsel and Decree of God which  
 " I come from him to testify unto you, that there  
 " is no other way but that. Now this you ac-  
 " knowledge, that I am a Teacher come from  
 " God; for no man can do those Miracles that  
 " I do, except God be with him; [v. 2.] how  
 " strangely incredulous therefore are you, that yet  
 " you will not believe me delivering that Do-  
 " ctrine, which by these Testimonies of my com-  
 " ing from God I confirm? For I prove that I  
 " have seen and known what I testify; I prove the  
 " truth



" truth of what I say by those Arguments that  
 " convince you, that I am a *Teacher come from God*.  
 Hence we may probably gather the meaning of  
 those words, *And no man hath ascended up to hea-*  
*ven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son*  
*of Man which is in heaven,* *vers. 13.* to be this :  
 " No man hath known the secret purposes of God,  
 " concerning the way of saving Mankind, *viz.*  
 " by the death of his Son : No man hath thus  
 " ascended into Heaven, but he *that is come from*  
 " *Heaven*, whom God hath sent to reveal this to  
 " you, even he who now speaketh to you, *who am*  
 " *in Heaven*, who know the purposes and inten-  
 " tions of my Father concerning the way of Sal-  
 " vation. This I take to be a more probable in-  
 terpretation of this difficult place, than that which  
 supposeth our Saviour to speak here of his local  
 ascension into Heaven afterward ; because, 1. The  
 words themselves seem not well able to bear the  
 notion of a future ascension. 2. As *Grotius* hath  
 well shewn, the phrase of ascending into Heaven  
 is in other places of Scripture to be taken in the  
 former sense, *viz.* of gaining knowledge from  
 God, as in *Prov. 30. 3, 4.* And 3. if thus it is  
 understood in this place, then what our Saviour  
 saith here hath a clear connexion with *vers. 11.*  
 where he rebuketh the *Jews* for not believing his  
 Revelations, taxing them of unreasonableness for  
 it, since he delivered nothing but what he had  
 seen and known from God ; and also with the pre-  
 cedent verse, where by *the heavenly things* our Sa-  
 viour speaks of, we agree ; that those Doctrines  
 which were to be known by his Revelation are  
 meant. But this by the by ; it is however clear  
 that our Saviour challengeth the *Jews* of unrea-  
 sonable incredulity, for disbelieving what was suf-  
 ficiently testified and proved to them.

I.

2. *Christ assigneth the true cause of their unbelief, This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil, vers. 19. i. e.* "The truth of that Doctrine which I bring, is so bright and clear, that the cause why men believe it not, is not because they want Reason and Argument to induce them thereunto; (or supposing that our Saviour means himself by Light) it is so evident that I am the Son God, that if you do not perceive it, 'tis not for want of means of Conviction, but because your deeds are evil; because my Doctrine is so contrary to your Lusts and Vices, that you are not willing it should be true, and so you do not attend to the evidence of its truth; and therefore greater shall be your Condemnation. Every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doth the truth, that is sincerely disposed to do whatever is the will of God, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be manifest, is not unwilling to have his actions proved, that they are wrought of God, whether they be according to the Will of God or not.

I think it is thus sufficiently plain, that the scope of our Saviour in this his discourse to Nicodemus, is to shew the necessity of coming to him, or believing in him, i. e. of being his Disciple, in order to everlasting Salvation; and to convince those of unreasonable obstinacy, and incredulity, who would not be his Disciples. It is therefore plain, that supposing the true Disciple of Christ is to be understood by the Regenerate man, then the beginning of our Saviour's discourse concerning the necessity of Regeneration is consonant to his plain designe, which was to shew why we must be

be his Disciples, and how inexcusable we are if we be not.

But that the connexion of the whole may be clearly seen, I shall here subjoyn a Paraphrase of that part of it which concerns Regeneration, proceeding upon our notion of it. It is probable, as *Grotius* observes, that after *Nicodemus* had acknowledged our Saviour to be sent from God, he asked him what Qualifications a man must have to see the Kingdom of God, which in his preaching he had made so much mention of: To which question our Saviour's answer was, *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God*; as if he had said, "No man can enter into the Kingdom of God, except he become my Disciple, which you seem unwilling to be, because you come secretly to me for fear of the Jews; but, I tell you, it is not sufficient for you to acknowledge to me that I am a Teacher sent from God, but withal you must become one of my Disciples, and own your self so to be, though you forfeit thereby the honour you have in the Jewish State; for you must forsake all to follow me.

*Nicodemus* not understanding this to be our Saviour's meaning, replies as if it was required that a man should be born again in the literal and proper sence; *How can a man be born when he is old, as I am? can he, &c.* Jesus answered, *Verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born of Water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God, q. d.* "It is not such a Birth that I mean, but that of Water and the Spirit; you must be born of Water, you must by Baptism become a professed Disciple of mine, whom you acknowledge to be a Teacher sent from God; and this is not



"all, you must be *born of the Spirit* too; it is e-  
 "qually necessary that by the *Operations* of the  
 "Holy Spirit ( the promise whereof is part of my  
 "Doctrine ) you become obedient in *Heart*  
 "and *Life* to those *Laws* which I deliver, which  
 "are so holy and divine, that they are hated by  
 "them *whose deeds are evil*, who will not be per-  
 "suaded to leave their sins, [vers. 6.] *That which*  
 "*is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is*  
 "*born of the spirit, is spirit.* That which is born in  
 "the literal sence, as when an Infant is born of his  
 "Mother, is discernible to your eyes, and the  
 "change made thereby is evident to your grosser  
 "Senses; it is not this change which I mean: but  
 "I say you must be *born of the Spirit*; and it is a  
 "spiritual change that I mean thereby, viz. that  
 "of the Dispositions of mens Hearts, and the  
 "manner of their Lives; which change, toge-  
 "ther with those *Operations* of the Spirit where-  
 "by it is produced, are not discernible the same  
 "way in which the natural Birth is [vers. 7, 8.]

Marvel not that I said unto thee, *Thou must be Born*  
*again.* The Wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou  
 hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it  
 cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is  
 born of Spirit. By this it should seem, that which  
 was most troublefom to Nicodemus to understand  
 was this, viz. *How a man could be born of the Spi-*  
*rit*; and that the difficulty which he stuck at in  
 this matter, was the *Imperceptibleness* of that Ope-  
 ration of the Spirit whereby this change was  
 produced; for how should a man know when he  
 is born of the Spirit? This being supposed, our  
 Saviour's answer to him removes the doubt; for  
 it shews, 1. That the *Operations* of the Spirit,  
 though they are not perceptible to the Senses;  
 yet

yet they may be otherways known; to this purpose he useth a familiar similitude to explain himself by, *viz.* that of the *Wind*, which blowes hither and thither, but is not discernible to the eye; and though we see it not, yet we are sure there is such a thing, because we *hear* it. Now as every *Body* is to be judged of by its proper *Sense*, so is every thing to be judged of by its proper *faculty*; and as we do not deny the *existence* of some *Bodies*, because they are not evident to *one sense*, if they are evident to another; so we are not to deny the existence of some things, because they are not evident to our *Senses* if they be evident to our *Mindes*, as the *Operations* of the Holy Spirit upon our *mindes* may be. 2. Our Saviour's answer shews that we may know an effect, the immediate cause whereof we do not know; and that by the same Similitude of the *Wind*, the natural cause whereof the generality of men, who are yet sure there is such a thing, are ignorant of. Now in like manner we may perceive or feel an effect in our *mindes*, *viz.* that change which the *Spirit* makes there, though we do not perceive, and in that sense do not know the *Operations* of the Spirit *themselves*, which are the causes of that change. And as that original or cause of that change is not perceived by us (as we know not whence the *Wind* cometh) so the end of it is not perceived by us neither; for that is eternal Life, which yet we do not see, (as we know not whither the *Wind* goeth) but onely believe. 3. Our Saviour's Similitude likewise shews, that a thing may be discoverable onely by its effects, as the *Wind* is by the *noise* it maketh, and other effects thereof; so likewise the *Operations* of the Holy Spirit upon our *mindes*, though they are not in themselves perceivable by us, yet

in their effects they are ; for if Christian Virtue and Piety cannot be attained, or preserved, without the Operations of the Holy Spirit, then where there is this change in a mans state, there we are sure have been, and still are, the Operations of the Spirit ; and though he doth not feel the *cause* it self, yet he discovers it in its *effects*.

Pag. 177.

Dr. *Owen* indeed tells us, that the *Work it self is discoverable in its Causes* ; and brings this very *Text* to prove his saying, which proves the contrary. 'Tis true, we know that the Spirit of God is the cause of this change ; but how ? not by the *Work it self*, but by the Revelation of *Christ*, who withal hath informed us, that we have no other way to discern the Operations of the Spirit in us, but by their effects, *i. e.* those alterations that are thereby produced in our Hearts and Lives. Thus then we may understand our Saviour's words :

“ Let not this startle you, that the Operations  
“ of the Holy Spirit, whereby you must be chan-  
“ ged, and as it were *born again*, are not discerni-  
“ ble and sensible ; for though you cannot *feel*  
“ them, yet you may *understand them* by the ef-  
“ fects and alterations in you that are *caused by*  
“ them.

Now whereas *Nicodemus* answered, *How can these things be?* I suppose the reason of his Hesitation was either, 1. That he did not understand this to be our Saviour's meaning ; or, 2. That he thought, as Dr. *Owen* does, that to be born again, was too *Hyperbolical an expression*, of that which he now perceived our Saviour meant by it. I cannot positively say which it was: But suppose



suppose whether you will, our Saviour's Reply to  
 him rebuked his Ignorance either way: *Art thou*  
*a master of Israel and knowest not these things?* vers.  
 10. q. d. "Art thou one of the Great Council, a  
 "learned Jew, and yet ignorant of these mat-  
 "ters? Do you not perceive that I speak to you of  
 "the necessity of becoming my Disciple, in such  
 "language, as any man who is vers'd in your Cu-  
 "stoms, and in the Writings of the Prophets, may  
 "easily understand? Is not being *born again* that  
 "very phrase whereby you express the making of  
 "a Profelyte? Is not *washing* one of the Cere-  
 "monies whereby a Profelyte is made amongst  
 "you? and therefore when I tell you *a man must*  
 "*be born of Water*, what should you think I  
 "mean, but that he must become my Disciple by  
 "*Baptism*? I have also told you that he must be  
 "*born of the Spirit too*; and can you be ignorant  
 "that those Prophecies which speak of the days  
 "of the *Messias*, do mention the Operations of  
 "the Holy Spirit upon the Hearts of men, which  
 "shall then be liberally bestowed upon the Sub-  
 "jects of his Kingdom, to make them good and  
 "holy persons, viz. that *God will circumcise the*  
 "*Hearts of his people, that he will take away their*  
 "*Heart of stone, and give them an Heart of flesh,*  
 "with his *Law written* in it, that they may be the  
 "true Disciples of the *Messias*, that Prophet to  
 "whom you are to hearken in all things? I say  
 "unto thee, *We speak that we do know, and testifie*  
 "*that we have seen, and ye receive not our testimo-*  
 "*ny,* [vers. 11.] Now I am that Prophet; but  
 "how credible soever that testimony is which is  
 "given hereof, ye regard it not. *If I have told*  
 "*you earthly things, and ye believe not; how shall you*  
 "*believe if I tell you of heavenly things?* [vers. 12.]

This

This last, is a place of some difficulty: for although by *heavenly things* are meant Doctrines which were to be known by the Revelation of *Christ*; yet by those *earthly things* (which our Saviour had told *Nicodemus* already) we must not understand truths merely *natural*; for that *Jesus* was *the Messias*, that it was necessary for the *Jews* to become *his* Disciples by Baptism, and to be *born of the Spirit*, which none but his Disciples could be; these were heavenly Doctrines too in this sence, that they were knowable onely by Revelation. Wherefore I conceive that by *heavenly things* here, may probably be meant such revealed Doctrines as were most contrary to the worldly and sensual expectations of the *Jews*, who had long cherished in themselves the notion of a *Messias*, who should fight their Battels for them, as their other Saviours and Deliverers had done, and rescue them from the *Roman Power*. Now these Doctrines were, that *Christ* should be delivered into the hands of the *Romans*, and be Crucified for the sins of the World; that *those who believed in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life*. Divers Considerations make it probable that these are the *heavenly things* meant by our Saviour in this place: for, 1. After he had made way for it, by telling *Nicodemus* that he onely ascended up into Heaven, *i. e.* knew the secret purposes of God, concerning the way of Salvation, he falls upon the mention of that *Death* which he was to undergo for the sins of the World. *And as Moses lifted up the Serpent in, &c.* 2. The Cross of *Christ*, was that which made the *Jews* most of all offended, that his Disciples should still pretend him to be *the Christ*. It was to the *Jews* a Stumbling-block, and

and to the Greek Foolishness; and therefore it is probable this was the thing which the Jews would hardly believe, viz. that God would save Mankind by the death of his Son. 3. When St. Peter rebuked our Saviour foretelling his own Passion, he said unto Peter, *Get thee behinde me, Satan, for thou savourest not the things*

*that be of God, or heavenly things, i. e. the wisdom of God's way to save the World; but the things that be of man; thou speakest according to the imaginations of the Jews, who perswade themselves that the Kingdom of the Messiah will be of this World.*

Lay all these things together, and it will appear probable, that by those heavenly things which our Saviour intimated would be more difficultly believed by the Jews, than those which he had already mentioned to Nicodemus, are meant, his Sufferings and Death, by which Believers should be saved, and which he discoursed to Nicodemus of presently after.

And then by the *earthly things*, on the other hand, we are to understand those truths which were indeed divinely revealed, but were not so contrary to the worldly expectations of the Jews as the other, viz. that Jesus was the Christ, and that all men were to be his Disciples; which the Jews would have been much more willing to be, had it not been for the meanness of his outward appearance, and his ignominious death afterwards.

This

*The opinion of Grotius that the *Figurae* are the similitudes of the Natural Birth, and the Wind which our Saviour used, and the *Imagina*, divine things spoken without this condescension by the use of Metaphors, &c. wants not its probability. Nor that of Dr. Hammond, who supposes the *Figura* to be things ordinary in the Jewish Law; which notion seems to be countenanced by ver. 31. But then by Believing, they are both forced to mean Understanding, whereas this notion does not only equally, if not better, agree with the Context; but may without using that liberty be applied to the Words.*



This I take to be a probable interpretation of this difficult place; but I do not think every body is bound presently to believe it, or to yield to it any further than he judges those reasons to be of weight, which I have offered for it. And if Dr. Owen, or any other *Divine*, can shew me a more probable sence of these words, or of any difficult passage in this discourse of our Saviour, than what I have propounded, I shall make no difficulty to forsake my own, and come over to his. In the mean time we may safely suppose that our Saviour spake to this purpose,

“ If I have proved to you by those miracles  
 “ which you acknowledge, that I am the *Messias*,  
 “ and consequently that you ought to be my Disci-  
 “ ples, and yet you will not believe me and become  
 “ my Disciples; how much more unlikely is it that  
 “ you will be so, after I tell you that I who am  
 “ your *Messias* must be lifted up upon a Cross, and  
 “ die for the sins of the World? this will go down  
 “ more hardly with you than any thing I have  
 “ told you hitherto. And yet this is the purpose of  
 “ God for the salvation of the world, as I know and  
 “ am come to tell you, who *have ascended into hea-*  
 “ *ven*, and am acquainted with *these heavenly things*,  
 “ these secret Counsels of God, which so far tran-  
 “ scend all the wisdom of men; and this is that  
 “ too which was prefigured, by *Moses lifting up*  
 “ *the Serpent in the Wilderneß*, &c.

Our Saviour thereupon proceeds, shewing it to be the purpose of God to save Mankind this way, *viz.* by faith in *Christ*; that there was no salvation to be expected but by becoming his Disciples; and that they who would not be so were inexcusable, as we have already shewn. And now

now I leave it to the Reader to judge, whether the *Paraphrase* which I have given of the former part of our Saviour's discourse to *Nicodemus*, does not make the connexion between all the parts of it very clear; and also whether our understanding the Regenerate man to be a true Disciple of *Christ*, (which is the notion this *Paraphrase* doth proceed upon) does not agree with the scope of our Saviour's whole discourse in this place.

## SECT. II.

I come at last to answer the Doctor's objection against our notion of Regeneration, which (as he saith) we suppose to be a Metaphorical expression of reformation of Life. His objection is this, *Nicodemus* knew the necessity of Reformation of life well enough, if he had ever read *Moses* or the *Prophets*. And to suppose that our Lord *Jesus Christ* proposed unto him the thing which he knew perfectly well, onely under a new name or notion, which he had never heard of before, so to take an advantage of charging him with being ignorant of what indeed he full well knew and understood, is a blasphemous imagination.

To this I answer, 1. That reformation of Life, which we say our Saviour meant by Regeneration, *Nicodemus* did not understand so perfectly well, as our Author imagines. For though he understood well enough that Reformation of Life, which was required by *Moses* and the *Prophets*, he did not yet understand the necessity of that reformation which was required by our Saviour, under which is supposed the believing of *Jesus* to be the *Christ*, the becoming of his Disciple, and the

the keeping of his Laws, which were better than the Laws of *Moses*. Now, as I have already told the Doctor, none of those *conformable Divines*, whom he endeavours to represent as odiously as he can, do mean any thing less by that reformation of life, which they affirm Regeneration to consist in, than such a reformation as supposeth faith in *Christ*, and being his Disciple, and a sincere change of the Minde to the love and obedience of God, and our Saviour *Jesus*. This is what we mean by that *Reformation*; and it is sufficiently plain, out of the Writings of those men whom the Doctor so tragically complains of, that they mean nothing less by it. And I am confident, so well do I know them, that there is not one of them who would not with all their Hearts forbear this use of that expression of *reformation and amendment of Life*, if they either thought it dangerous or offensive; which hitherto they have not, because the state of Regeneration is thus described in the Scriptures themselves: *He that doth righteousness is born of God; and he that doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven, he is my Brother, &c.* Now this is my first answer to the Doctor, that that reformation of Life which his Adversaries mean, which namely implies being a sincere Disciple of *Jesus*, *Nicodemus* did not understand the necessity of, but was that very thing which our Saviour designed to make him understand.

2. So mistaken is the Doctor every way; *This thing was proposed unto Nicodemus, not under a new, but under an old name or notion: for, 1. The name and notion of being born again was not new, since the Jews counted their Proselytes Recens Nati, New-born men, and as such to have quit-*



quitted their Relation to their former Country, Kindred, and Parents, and become the Children of *Abraham*. 2. To be *born of Water* was no new notion neither, since *purifying* by Water, or *Baptism*, was one of the Ceremonies of this Regeneration by *Profelytism*. 3. Neither was it a new notion to be *born of the Spirit*; it was to be found in the Old Testament, and the Doctor himself findes it there in those words where God promiseth to *Circumcise the Hearts of his People*, to take away their Heart of stone, and to give them an Heart of flesh with his Law written in it. Had *Nicodemus* therefore talked like himself, when our Saviour spake to him of the necessity of being *born again of Water and the Spirit*, then instead of asking that strange Question, *Can a man when he is old, &c.* and afterward, *How can these things be?* he should either have offered himself to be a *Pro-selyte* or *Disciple of Christ*, and to submit to his divine Laws, (which he that observes is *born of God*, hath a *new Heart*, &c.) or offered some reason to the contrary.

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Thus then I answer the Doctor; that supposing Regeneration to be a Metaphorical expression of becoming a true Disciple of *Jesus*, our Saviour did not propose an old thing to *Nicodemus* under a new name and notion, to puzzle him, as the Doctor pretends; but on the contrary, he proposed a new thing to him under old and familiar expressions.

And thus, though the Doctor knew not how we could do it, I hope we have freed our selves from the guilt of that *Blasphemous Imagination* he would fain fasten upon us.

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The sum of what hath been said is this : That Regeneration, which is an effect of the Holy Spirit, consists in being a true Disciple of *Christ*, i. e. in believing his Gospel, so as to yield a sincere obedience to his Laws. This is that Regeneration which is necessary to *Adult* persons, as *Nicodemus* was, and as you may remember is one of those *needful effects*, for the producing of which in our mindes, God will give the Holy Spirit to us if we ask him.

Thus have I shewn what those Qualifications are for the *effecting* of which the Holy Spirit is promised in St. *Luke* 11. 13. Now though I have not pretended to prove from this place, that God will give the Holy Spirit, to work faith, and the beginnings of a good minde, and good desires in us ; ( and there was good reason for it, since the Spirit is here promised to Believers, and such as desire to do the will of God ) yet I intended not to exclude them from being the effects of the Holy Spirit : and I shall immediately prove that they are ; for I now proceed to shew what those several Graces are, which the Scriptures particularly ascribe to the Operations of the Holy Spirit ; which was the second way propounded for the resolving of the first Question ; and will not onely *confirm* what has been offered for that end from St. *Luke*, but fully satisfy the Question we are upon.

## C H A P. IV.

*Concerning the several Graces of the Holy Spirit.*

## S E C T. I.

**I**N the first place, *Faith* it self, as that signifies a *firm perswasion* of the truth of our Saviour's Doctrine, is an effect in our Mindes, which the Scripture frequently ascribes to the Operations of the Holy Spirit. This is the first *Grace* of the Holy Spirit, which I mention, because an hearty belief of the Gospel, is the foundation of all other *Christian* Virtues. And I shall now shew that the Spirit of God is given to prepare our mindes as they ought to be prepared, that we may become the true Disciples of *Christ*.

To speak clearly to this matter, we are to consider, 1. That the *Revelations* of the *Doctrines* of the Gospel, and sufficient *testimonies* that they are divinely revealed, are presupposed to our *obligation* of believing *them*; and, 2. That teachableness, and due attention is necessarily required to *Faith*, or actual believing of those *Doctrines*. Now that which I shall take upon me to prove, is this; That the Teachableness of Minde, which is necessary to actual Believing, is from the Holy Spirit. And I only say, that Faith in this sence, is an effect of his Operations upon the Mindes of men.



But I do not say, that the Holy Spirit doth now *reveal* the Doctrines of the Gospel to men by immediate *Inspiration*; or that he *convinceth* them of their truth by any immediate, or any new *testimony* whatsoever, that they may believe.

Not the First; because we have them in the Scriptures. As to the Doctrines of the Gospel themselves, we may say with the Apostle, *God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit*, 1 Cor. 2. 10. But not to us as he did to the Apostles; to *them*, by Inspiration; to *us*, by their Writings; whereby we may be fully instructed in all necessary Truth.

Not the Second; because the Doctrines of the Gospel have been sufficiently confirmed already, even by the *demonstration of the Spirit, and Power*, in the Miracles and Resurrection of *Christ*, and the supernatural Gifts which the Apostles and the primitive Believers had. And there is not any one promise in the Scripture, that I can finde, that God will give unto us any further testimony of the Holy Ghost to the truth of the Gospel, after that which was given to it by the Holy Ghost at first.

Wherefore we have no Warrant to look for any private Illumination and Conviction by the Holy Spirit, to assure us of the truth of that Doctrine, which hath been abundantly confirmed to our hands by so many divine Testimonies already.

It is the same *light*, and the same *evidence*, by which we discern the truth of the Gospel, that those to whom *Christ* and his Apostles preached, discerned

discerned it by, *i. e.* the Testimonies by which they proved their Doctrines: onely with this difference, that they saw and heard them; we know them by the tradition of the Scriptures. Our Saviour saith; *Light is come into the world; but men, &c. i. e.* The Will of God was plainly revealed by him, and he was clearly proved to be the Son of God by the testimony of his Works, &c. and yet many would not believe him. Now this is *that Light* which still continues in the world, *viz.* the Revelations of the Gospel, and the Testimonies by which they were confirmed; for we have them in the Scriptures, which are delivered to us, that we might believe the same Doctrines which *Christ* and his Apostles preached to the world, and upon the same evidence whereby men were at first convinced of their truth.

Therefore I do not say that the Holy Spirit worketh Faith in us by illuminating our mindes with any new Revelation of the Christian Doctrine, or any new Testimony of the truth thereof; for this is more than needs to be done, and I conceive, more than any body can prove. But he doth it by disposing our mindes to *attention* and *teachableness*; or to that *temper* which whosoever is of, will believe truths that are proposed to him with sufficient evidence.

It is true indeed, that there is no more required, to an understanding man's assent to a true proposition in Philosophy, than to explain the meaning, and represent the reasons of it to him intelligibly and clearly. This ordinarily is sufficient in that case: But there is more assistance required towards the belief of the Gospel, though propounded with sufficient evidence of divine Revelation.

velation. For there is this difference between the truths of Religion, and conclusions in natural Philosophy, and other Sciences; that our sensual Appetites, and worldly Interests are thwarted by *those*, but not by *these*; and therefore we are not so apt to rise up in contradiction to the latter, as we are to the former, though they may be both proved with equal evidence. Religion is to govern our lives, and bindeth us to deny the pleasures and advantages of sin, under the penalty of God's high displeasure. And no wonder if the Lusts of men influence their Judgements, and blas their Understandings against the belief of those Doctrines which are so irreconcilable to a wicked life. These are the things which do not onely so often spoil the virtue and efficacy of Faith where it is, but do also cause uncertainty and unbelief, where Faith is not, but where in all reason it ought to be. For they make men unwilling to believe; and this unwillingness doth on the one hand hinder their attention to the force of those *Arguments* which prove the Gospel to be indeed the Word of God; and inclines them on the other hand to lean to the weakest Objections that can be offered against it. This was just the case of the great men amongst the Jews; as is plain, from that *one* instance in *John 9.* amongst *many*. For when our Saviour had opened the Eyes of him that was born blinde, the *Pharisees* would believe never the more that *he was of God*; and yet all the pretence they could finde against him, was because this cure was wrought on the *Sabbath-day*, vers. 16. For when they had strictly examined all circumstances of the Miracle, and the healed person in conclusion talked such unanswered reason against them: *Herein is a marvelous thing that ye know not whence he is, &c.* Since  
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the world began was it not heard that any man opened the Eyes of one that was born blinde: If this man were not of God, he could do nothing, i. e. he could do no such works as these: they were resolved to give him the hearing no longer; but first bitterly reproached him, and then cast him out. Now our Saviour frequently told these men that their prejudice against him arose from their Lusts: *How*, saith he, *can ye believe, who receive honour from one another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God onely?* John 5. 44. i. e. so long as your Hearts are set upon worldly greatness, and the praise of men, which if you can compass, you care not in the mean while whether God approves of you or not; it is no wonder that ye reject my Doctrine, who came not to answer your ambitious and worldly expectations, although I come with testimony from God, and the works that I do bear witness of me, vers. 36.

Thus the Apostle tells us, That the God of this world blindeth the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine unto them, 2 Cor. 4. 4. where we have a plain reason given us by the Apostle why some believed not, who had the light of the Gospel shining about them, i. e. who had it preached to them with its proper evidence, viz. because the God of this world had blinded their Mindes, i. e. because they were blinded with the prejudices of prevailing Lust and Passion, by which the Devil rules in the Children of disobedience.

Wherefore as Faith is necessary to that more perfect victory over our Lusts, which includes the universal doing of God's Will: So on the other

hand, our mindes must in some degree be disengaged from the power of our Lusts, before we can heartily believe, *viz.* so far as that we may be ready to yield to the truth, how contrary soever it proves to our sensual and worldly affections, and consequently that they shall not hinder our *attention and consideration* when the Word of God is offered to be made known to us.

Of this teachable disposition we have a remarkable instance, in *Acts 16. 14.* *The Lord opened Lydia's heart that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul:* where we may observe, 1. That her being qualified to hear, which is here expressed by the *opening* of her *Heart*, is ascribed to a divine operation, which prevented even her attention to what she heard. 2. That the immediate effect of the *Lords opening ber Heart*, was not her *believing*, but her *attending* to those things which were spoken of *Paul*, i. e. she heard him diligently without prejudice and passion, and was willing to embrace the truth. This was the effect of God's Spirit; and whoever is thus disposed, will believe the Gospel when it is made known to him; because it is indeed the Word of God.

This is that temper of minde, which was all that our Saviour desired to finde among men, in order to the convincing of them that he was the true Prophet: *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of my self,* Joh. 7. 17. i. e. If a man be willing to do whatsoever shall appear to be the Will of God, and so is not prejudiced against the truth by his Lusts, such a one will easily be convinced that my Doctrine is of God. And because this

this temper comes from the divine Spirit, therefore he that is thus disposed is said to be of God. For it is exactly to the same purpose, what our Saviour saith, *John 8. 47. He that is of God, beareth God's Words; ye therefore bear them not, because ye are not of God.* For this was the Answer he made to that Question of his own; *If I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?* He gives the reason himself; *Because ye are not of God.* The meaning whereof is plain from *vers. 44. Ye are of your Father the Devil, and the lusts of your Father ye will do; he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, &c.* So that to be of the Devil, is to be wedded to our Lusts, and enraged against the truth that contradicts them. And therefore the contrary state or temper, to be of God, is plainly to be ready to perform all duty, and to believe all truth; and whoever was thus disposed, would bear God's Words, and believe them, *vers. 47.*

Thus after our Saviour had appealed to the Miracles which he wrought before his Enemies, *Job. 10. 25.* he tells them, *But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep.* Where by Sheep cannot be meant actual Disciples; for then the sense were, Ye believe not, because ye believe not: But such as were by a teachable spirit disposed to be so, and would hear his voice; for such as these would follow him as soon as he called them; because he was the true Shepherd. Now that this preparedness of minde to embrace the truth, was an effect of the divine Spirit, is clearly implied in *vers. 29. My Father who gave them me, i. e. who hath thus disposed and qualified them to hear my voice, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hands, to defeat them of that eternal Life which Christ had promised, v. 28.*



All these places being compared with *John* 6. 37. give a clear light to the true interpretation thereof; *All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me*, i. e. will believe in me, and become my Disciples: and then *to be given of the Father*, is the same thing with being resolved to *do the Will of God*, *Joh. 7. 17.* and being of *God*, *Joh. 8. 47.* and being *Christ's Sheep*, *Joh. 10. 26.* All which Phrases signifie that humility and teachableness of minde, whereby men are prepared to believe the truth: Onely the *Fathers giving* such persons to *Christ*, is an expression noting that divine Grace whereby their mindes are thus disposed; for which reason, being brought to this temper, is called, *vers. 44.* being *drawn by the Father*. *No man can come to me, except the Father who hath sent me draw him*, i. e. unless the grace of God hath so far prevailed over his Affections, as to indue him with an impartial love to the truth, and his *Heart* be thereby *opened to attend to God's Word*. And in this sence we may use those words of the Apostle spoken upon another occasion; *No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost*, *1 Cor. 12. 3.*

This is the substance of what I can finde in the Scripture concerning this matter; and I suppose it is sufficiently shewn, that faith, or a firm perswasion that *Jesus* is the Son of God, and that his Doctrine is the Word of God, is an effect of a divine Operation upon our mindes; and that the first preparations within us towards Regeneration are from the Holy Spirit: And consequently that the *Semipelagian* opinion introduced by the *Massilienses* upon occasion of the Pelagian controverſie, viz. that there is no necessity of preventing Grace, though Grace be necessary to make our Faith

Faith fruitful of good works; but that Faith and the first inclinations of the Will to that which is good, are merely from our selves, is contrary to the Scriptures.

## SECT. 2.

Now when we are once perswaded that *Jesus is the Son of God*, that which still remains to be done by us, is *to overcome the world*, and *keep the Commandments of God*. Indeed, if we believe in Jesus, we have entertained into our mindes such forcible and prevailing considerations, as will not easily suffer us to disobey him in any thing; and they have so much power to lead our Affections after them, and to govern our practices, that I always thought the *Senipelagians* might with more appearance of reason have questioned the Doctrine of the Church concerning those divine Operations by which the Faith of a Believer is crowned with all other Christian Virtues, than concerning those which are preparatory to Faith it self: for of the two, he is a more unreasonable man, who, believing God's Word, is yet so mad as to go on still in his sins, than he who believes it not; and since the Lusts of men make them so unwilling to attend to those truths which are against them, we might think it were an easier matter to keep the Faith of *Christ* from entering into their Hearts, than to resist the power of it when it is once admitted.

But now as the evidence of those Reasons, by which the Gospel is proved to be a divine Revelation, is far from excluding all need of a divine Influence upon our mindes to create a firm Faith  
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in us: So neither does the power of those motives which are contained in our Faith, render the concurrence of the Holy Spirit needless, to move our Wills to that which is good, and upon good principles; but still our sufficiency is of God; without whose Grace, the temptations of the World, and the lusts of our corrupt Nature, which make us unwilling to entertain the truth, would always suppress the force and vertue of it afterwards. Thus our Saviour told his Disciples, *Without me ye can do nothing*, John 15. 5. but he did not suppose that they were incapable of doing any thing *with him* too; but that they had power to *bring forth fruit* unto God, and that it was from him. Now that this power imparted to them was not merely the effect of the Revelation of his Doctrine to them, is plain from hence, that they already believed the Revelations he had made: *Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken to you*, vers. 3. and yet he tells them that *without him they can do nothing*; which must needs imply some grace distinct from the bare revelation of the Gospel, by which they had already bore some fruit, and were capable of bringing forth *more*, vers. 2, 3.

But that all those dispositions and virtues wherein our obedience to the Gospel doth consist, are as well the graces of the Holy Spirit, as the effects of our Faith, is clearly and fully affirmed in those words of the Apostle, *Phil. 2. 13. It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do*; which being again spoken to Believers, manifestly suppose a divine Operation distinct from the Revelation of the Gospel, which enabled them to *will* and to *do*, i. e. to perform that obedience from their very souls, which would qualifie them  
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for *eternal happiness*: For this is the motive by which the Apostle encourageth them to *work out their Salvation*, vers. 12. by universal *obedience*, as *hitherto* they had done. Now because the motive extends to engage us to every part of our duty; therefore God worketh in us, that we may be every way so disposed in minde and *will*, and obedient in life, as to become meet for the Kingdom of Heaven. Wherefore the fear and love of God, and godly Sorrow, and true Repentance, and the hope of eternal Life, together with all Christian Virtues; such as Righteousness, Mercy, Patience, *Love, Peace, Joy, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, and Temperance*, are the Graces of the Spirit. Wherefore Lastly, our doing that which God requires, and with that fear and love of him which he requires too, are the effects of his Operations in us.

If any thing were yet wanting to satisfie us fully in this matter, our being taught to *pray that we may not enter into temptation, and to pray always that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil*, would leave no room for doubting whether of our selves we need, or by promise have this great encouragement to the study of Godliness and Virtue, or not: For these directions were unprofitable, if we either needed no strength from the divine Spirit against our Temptations, or if it were not to be gained by our Prayers. Much less would those Prayers of St. Paul for other Christians, which we so often meet withal, have signified any thing to their advantage or encouragement, if there were not a divine Grace obtainable by them, for the producing of those effects which he so much desired to see in their conversation. And these effects were no other than

than all kindes of Christian Virtue and Goodness, as we may learn by the following places. *Wherefore also we pray alwayes for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of Faith with power, 2 Theff. 1. 11. i. e. that God would make their Faith fruitful of all good works, acceptable to him, that the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ might be glorified in them, as he speaks in the following verse. Again, we do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his Will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, Col. 1. 9, 10. Thus in another place; For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would grant you according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the Inner man.*

Now that which the Apostle prays for in these and many like places, is plainly this; That those Christians to whom he wrote might attain all those Qualifications which the Gospel requires in Believers. And from hence it follows that God hath not left the success of the Gospel to depend upon that force onely, which the bare Revelation of the motives to obedience hath to perswade us. For if we could reasonably expect no other power to overcome the world, and to practise all Christian Virtues, than what ariseth merely from *such a consideration* of the promises and threatnings of the Gospel, and all other obligations to obedience, represented to us therein, as we are able to excite in our selves, and to bring one another to; then did the Apostle in vain spend those his solemn Prayers in behalf of others; and in vain were they

they required to pray for themselves in like manner: and it would be lost labour to call now upon God to help us by his Grace, after he has revealed the Doctrines of the Gospel to us, and settled the *Ministry* of the Church, to bring men to repentance and good works.

Seeing therefore that the attainment of all Virtues and Qualifications necessary to Salvation, ought to be a subject of our Prayers; seeing these Prayers cannot be profitable, unless there be a divine Grace, and that distinct from the Revelation of the Gospel obtainable thereby, for the producing of those Qualifications in us; since Prayer also is one necessary means prescribed for the attaining of them; it follows that all Christian Virtues are the Graces of the Holy Spirit, or the effects of his Operation in us. Wherefore we may conclude with St. James, *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning,* James 1. 5, 17. who will not fail of his promise, but give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.

### SECT. 3.

By the same Argument it is clear, that there is a communication of the divine Spirit to good men, that they may yet further improve in the fruits of Faith, and grow in Grace. As our Saviour saith, *Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit,* Joh. 15. 2. For thus also the Apostle saith, *And this I pray,*  
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*that your love may abound yet more and more, in knowledge and in all judgement; that you may still be more powerfully prompted to Charity, and all Christian works, by a deep sense of their goodness; that you may approve things that are excellent; that you may apprehend all Christian Virtues to be as excellent as they are in their own nature, that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; that being thus strongly disposed to all righteousness, you may constantly and universally do the Will of God, being filled with the fruits of righteousness, Phil. 1. 9, 10. And this progress in the Christian life which the Apostle prayed for in their behalf, together with that perseverance which it would be the means of, he does not only by his Prayers suppose to be the effect of a divine Operation; but he expressly ascribes it thereunto, vers. 6. where he tells them how strongly he was perswaded, that God who had begun a good work in them would perfect it until the day of Christ. To the same purpose is that Prayer, The God of Peace make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, Heb. 13. 21.*

But if we consult the Holy Scriptures, we shall finde that the Operations of the Holy Spirit are more plentifully communicated to men, when they become holy and good, than they were before; and this I take to be clearly affirmed in those passages wherein God is said to *dwell* in them. And because this consideration cannot but strongly move us to follow the study of Piety, I shall distinctly shew, 1. What we are to understand by God's *dwelling* in men; and, 2. That they are holy and good men only in whom God dwells.

As to the former, it is observable that God's dwelling in Christians is sometimes joyned with the mention of their being his Temple, as you may see, 1 Cor. 3. 16. 2 Cor. 6. 16. Eph. 2. 21, 22. Now from hence it is obvious to gather, that these Phrases allude to what had been said of God's dwelling in the Temple at Hierusalem, and before that in the Tabernacle; and therefore that they will be more easily explained by observing the use of them in the Old Testament; and to this way we are plainly directed in the New, as you will see by consulting 2 Cor. 6. 16. where the Apostle cites a place out of the Old, containing God's promise to dwell among the Israelites.

First of all, the *Sheckinah*, or Habitation of God, was in the holy place within the Vail, where God said *he would appear in the Cloud of Incense*, Lev. 16. 2. and where the Ark of God was. And hence the place of the Ark was called his Dwelling, as we may see, by comparing David's intimation of his purpose to build an house for God, with God's Message to him upon that occasion: *I dwell*, saith David, *in an house of Cedar, and the A R K O F G O D dwelleth within Curtains*, 2 Sam. 7. 2. But the Prophets words to him were these; *Thus saith the Lord, Shalt thou build me an house for M E to dwell in, or for M Y A R K, whereas to this day I have walked in a Tabernacle?* vers. 5. Thus the place within the Vail where the Ark was, while the Tabernacle stood, and the Oracle into which it was carried after the building of the Temple, was called *the Most Holy place*, the place where God vouchsafed to be present in a peculiar manner. The Symbols of his presence, there, were the *Cherubims*, or Angels under which the Ark was placed; and thus we finde in Jacob's vision,

vision, that the presence of God was signified by an appearance of Angels, Gen. 28. 12. And the manner of the appearance of the Angel to the Shepherds, is described by *the glory of the Lord shining round about them*, Luke 2. 9. For this reason it is that God is so often called by the name of *him that dwelleth between the Cherubims*, who was pleased thereby to signify his presence in the Most Holy place.

But that which I chiefly aim at is this, that God's dwelling in this place was a testimony of his peculiar mercy and kindness towards the House of *Israel*, and that he would bless and prosper them, if they would keep his Commandments. And for this reason the Ark was called the *Ark of the Covenant* between God and them. For first the Tables of the Commandments which they were to keep, were laid up in the Ark; and then the Blessings which God would bestow upon them, were signified by the Ark's standing under the *Mercy-seat*, which was covered with the Wings of the Cherubims, between which God was so often said to dwell: So that the presence of God was there exhibited, as it were sitting upon a Throne of Mercy, to dispense his favours and blessings amongst the Children of *Israel*. And to this purpose it is observable, that God's dwelling thus in the Most Holy place, is called his *dwelling amongst the Israelites*. Thus when he commanded the building of the Ark, *Let them, saith he, make me a Sanctuary, that I may dwell amongst THEM*, Exod. 25. 8. And after he had promised to sanctify the Tabernacle with his Glory, he tells *Moses*, *And I will dwell amongst the Children of Israel, and will be their God*, Exod. 29. 45. Now that the presence of his mercy and favour towards them,



them, was meant in this promise, appears by the following words; *And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Ægypt: i. e. he would so manifest his power in protecting and defending them from all their Enemies, that they should know he had the same care of them which he shewed in delivering them from the Ægyptian bondage. But this is yet more clearly signified by those words; In all places where I record my NAME, I will come unto thee, and BLESS thee, Exod. 20. 24. For the Name of God, as we find in 2 Sam. 6: 2. was, The Lord of Hosts that dwelleth between the Cherubims. And this is that account which the Psalmist gives of God's dwelling in Sion, where the Ark of his presence was: The Lord hath chosen Sion, he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it. I will abundantly satisfy her poor with bread; I will cloath her Priests with salvation, and her Saints shall shout aloud for joy, Psal. 132. 13. Thus in times of distress and danger they began their prayers for deliverance, by invoking the Lord God of Israel that dwelleth between the Cherubims, 2 Kings 19. 15. and Psal. 80. 1. By all which it appears, that Gods dwelling there signified the peculiar favour which he had towards the house of Israel before all other people. And accordingly we may observe that the Scripture doth use to express the presence of God amongst them, when they were punished for their sins, not by dwelling with them; but by visiting them; which, you know, is a word that does not imply continuance and long abode; as the other does; and is therefore much fitter than that, to express the presence of his angry Justice, who delighteth not in Vengeance, but in Mercy; and who is more easily prevailed with to with-*

draw his displeasure, than his favour and kindness. *Thus saith the high and lofty One — I D W E L L with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit; which that it signifies the lasting presence of his favour, is plain from the following words: For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth; for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made, Isa. 57. 15, 16.* Although God is said to visit men both when he is present to punish them, as in *Exod. 32. 34. Psal. 89. 36, &c.* and when he is present to deliver and bless them, as in *Exod. 3. 16. Psal. 106. 4.* yet 'tis in respect of the latter onely, that he is said to dwell amongst them.

Now as I observed before, the Apostle cites that promise of God made to the Israelites, that he *would dwell in them*, applying it to the state of the Christian Church, as you may see, *2 Cor. 6. 16.* Wherefore God's dwelling in men, as this phrase is used in the New Testament, signifies also his peculiar grace and favour toward them; as the Apostle himself explains it, by subjoyning that other place thereto; *And I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my Sons and Daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty.* And this is that testimony which he hath given us hereof, that *the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth, John 1. 14.* By whom we have received God's blessings and favours, and the clear revelations of his Will, more freely than the Israelites ever did by the dwelling of the Ark amongst them. *They* prayed towards their most Holy place, where God was extraordinarily present, that he would stir up his strength and come and save them: But *we* look up to the more Holy Mercy-seat, where God is more gloriously present

sent than he was between the *Cherubims*, even to *Jesus*, whom all the *Angels of God* worship, and in whom the fulness of the God-head dwelleth bodily, that through him we may have help and salvation: The Name of God which he hath now recorded amongst us, is, *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*; and by this name we invoke him that he would come unto us, and bless us. And there is as great difference between the Blessings, that God's coming to us and dwelling amongst us implies, and those which were promised to the *Israelites*, as between the testimonies themselves of God's presence amongst them and amongst us. They were temporal favours and deliverances which they promised to themselves from God's presence in the most Holy place: But we look for a salvation incomparably more excellent, God having blessed us through *Christ with all spiritual blessings* in things that concern Heaven, *Eph. 1. 3.* The Enemies we are to subdue by the strength of the Lord, and the power of his might, are those which would hinder us of our heavenly Canaan, viz. our sensual Lusts, and earthly Affections, and the temptations of the World and the Devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood; but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickednesses in high places, *Eph. 6. 12.* against all the suggestions of evil spirits, whether to more gross and sensual, or to more refin'd and spiritual vices: And they are Enemies so much more dangerous than those which the *Israelites* had to deal withal, that theirs do not deserve to be called *Principalities*, &c. when they are compared with those here mentioned by the Apostle. Thus by the Spirit of God dwelling in us, twice mentioned by St. Paul, *Rom. 8. 9, 11.* we are to understand the presence



of his Grace, whereby we are constantly enabled to *mortifie the deeds of the Body*, vers. 13. For then our Bodies shall have a blessed Resurrection, vers. 11. and *the Spirit is life, because of Righteousness*, vers. 10. our Souls shall then be qualified for eternal Life and Happiness. Now this being certain to come to pass if the Spirit of God dwelleth in us, it is plain, that the peculiar grace and favour of God towards us, which is signified thereby, is that by which we may be kept from *living after the flesh*, which if we do, *we shall die*, and enabled to *mortifie the deeds of the Body*, to subdue our spiritual Enemies more perfectly, and to prevail finally against them, that *we may live*, vers. 13.

Therefore to conclude this point; as God's *dwelling* amongst the *Israelites* signified his peculiar favour to them in protecting and defending them, and bringing them to the Land of *Canaan*, and blessing them with plenty and increase, &c. so is the peculiar presence of his Grace signified too, by that his *dwelling* in us, which is mentioned in the New Testament; but this in order to that more eminent blessing of *an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation*, 1 Pet. 1. 4, 5.

I shall onely adde, that as *this presence* of God still denotes his goodness and mercy, as was proved by St. Paul's interpretation of it, 2 Cor. 6. 16. so *dwelling* does, according to the propriety of the word, signifie that this grace and goodness shall not be *transitory*, but *abiding*, while the condition abides upon which it is promised; and that condition is no other than this, that we be careful

to keep the Commandments of God; which is the second thing I am now to discourse of; but before I attempt it, I must confess that I am now falling upon a subject which belongs to the second Question, *viz. Who they are to whom the promise of the Holy Spirit is made*; which I shall fully treat of in the sixth Chapter. But there is this excuse to be made for preventing some part of the designe of that Chapter; that the consideration of the several *ends* and *degrees* of the Holy Spirit's Operations, is so neerly related to that which concerns the *Objects* of those Operations, and so often interwoven with it, that they cannot be so fully separated, and distinctly treated of, as we could wish. Wherefore

2. I come to shew that they are onely good and holy men in whom God is said to *dwell*. And this I think is not obscurely intimated by the Ark's being call'd peculiarly the *Ark of his presence*: for as the *Cherubims* were the Symbols or visible Tokens of the *divine presence* in the most Holy place; as the *Mercy-seat* signified the *end* of God's presence there, *viz.* to dispense his blessings and graces amongst his people: So the *Ark* being the peculiar place of his presence, seems clearly to note upon what *condition* he would be thus gracious to them, *viz.* if they would keep his Commandments, the Tables whereof, you know, were laid up in that place. How probably it might be inferred from hence, that God dwells onely in good men, I shall not say at present; but sure I am, that there is a true harmony between this explication of those *Types* and *Figures*, and between the clear and evident Doctrines of the New Testament concerning this matter; which I lay the greatest stress upon, and which you may finde in such passages as these:

*He that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him: and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us, 1 John 3. 24. and the same is repeated, Chap. 4. vers. 13. Now doubtless he speaketh here of such a privilege, as those who kept not the Commandments of God had no reason to pretend to. Again, vers. 14. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God (i. e.) who is not afraid of suffering for him, vers. 18. and hath overcome the world, Chap. 5. vers. 5. God dwelleth in him. But in that place of St. Paul to the Corinthians; which we have already noted, it is observable, that obedience and true holiness is made the condition of God's dwelling in us: God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people; wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, i. e. I will then dwell in you; as I have promised. And this is yet more clear from the beginning of the next Chapter; Having therefore these promises, that God will dwell in us, &c. let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, that it may be unto us as God hath promised. Now whereas the Apostle tells them, vers. 16. Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in you, &c. we must observe that their being God's Temple signifies the right he had to their service; but by his dwelling in them, that peculiar favour and grace wherewith he would reward their obedience; so that the Apostle useth a double Argument to perswade them to cleanse themselves: 1. From their duty; they ought so to do, being God's Temple: and this Argument he elsewhere more largely insists upon; What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost*



*Ghost in you*, ( the outward Court as it were of the Lord's house, and that here especially noted, because he was warning them to flee Fornication, which is a sin that defiles the Body ) *which ye have of God, and ye are not your own: for ye are bought with a price, therefore glorifie God in your body, and in your spirit, which are Gods*, 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. In which words it is plain, that he principally urgeth them to consider the *right* by which <sup>the</sup> their serving God by an holy use of themselves was due. 2. From the reward of so doing; for then, as God hath said, *He will dwell in them, and walk in them*, as in his *Temple*; but not upon other terms. Thus although the House of *Israel* was God's peculiar by vertue of that Covenant which he had made with them, and his particular right to their service grounded thereupon, which remained even when they rebelled against him; yet when they did so, he dwelt not amongst them, he did not *come unto them and bless them*, but forsook them, and departed from his house, although the Ark of his presence was still amongst them. In like manner, we who have been admitted into God's Covenant by Baptism, and thereby consecrated to his use and service, are become his *Temple* and *peculiar*, and we cannot alienate his right to us. But if we profane our selves, if we defile the Temple of God, if our *Mind*es be unholy, and our *Actions* wicked, God dwelleth not in us; for what fellowship hath Righteousness with Unrighteousness? What communion hath Light with Darknes? They are those *Virtues* by which we grow like to God, that make us capable of those Communications of the divine Spirit, which are signified by his dwelling in us. And the nearer we ascend to God by righteousness and true goodness, which is a participation of the divine Na-

ture, the more freely and plentifully we receive the emanations of his grace and love. It is the minde of a good Christian wherein God delighteth to *dwell*, and to shew himself graciously present: For this is a Temple (to speak in the language of the Metaphor) where his *glory is indeed spoken of*. Here his Name is honoured, and his great Perfections adored; his immense Presence, his infinite Power, Wisdom and Goodness effectually acknowledged, not onely by a bare confession that there is a Being absolutely perfect; but by affections suitable to the Divine Attributes, his Goodness being here loved, his Justice feared, his Power and Wisdom revered, his Fidelity and Truth trusted, and his Sovereign Dominion owned by a spirit of obedience and submission to it, which are incomparably more effectual acknowledgments of the Divine perfections, than *whole Burnt-offerings and Sacrifices*: For this, as our Saviour speaks, is to worship God in spirit and in truth. Such a Temple as this, God is so delighted in, that in comparison therewith, he disregarded the Temple at *Hierusalem*, with all the external services that belonged to it: For that God dwelleth in pious mindes, was not unknown to the *Jews*. *Where is the house that ye build unto me, and where is the place of my rest? To him will I look, saith the Lord, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite heart, and trembleth at my word, Isa. 66. 2, 3.* Thus saith the high and holy One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the spirit of the contrite ones, Isa. 57. 15.

Let us now lay these things together, and the conclu-

conclusion will be, that God's *dwelling* in men, implies a plentiful communication of Divine grace to *confirm and strengthen them in all goodness*; which was what I took upon me to shew under this head. For since this expression of God's dwelling in men, denotes the presence of a peculiar grace and favour to those in whom he is said to dwell, which is not afforded to others: Since the dwelling of the Holy Ghost in Believers is to enable them to mortifie the deeds of the body, and to prevail finally against all their spiritual Enemies: Since also it is true, that God dwelleth in good and righteous, but not in impure and unholy persons; it follows, in the first place, that after we are regenerated, it is still by the grace of God, and the Operations of his Holy Spirit, that we are enabled to proceed in vertue and godliness, and to persevere therein to the end: for God dwelleth in us, that we may *mortifie the deeds of the body* by the Spirit. Secondly, it follows also, that there is a *more abundant measure* of Divine Grace communicated to holy persons, than to those who are not so: For God's dwelling implies the presence of more than ordinary Grace. And thus our Saviour also hath plainly told us: *To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundantly.*

Finally, this Doctrine is very well consistent with that of attributing the beginnings of Christian Faith and goodness in us, to the Operations of the Holy Spirit. For although the Spirit of God dwells onely in good men, yet it is by his Operations that any are made so at first; and as the Apostle speaks, *we are built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit*, Eph. 2. 22. But his dwelling in us afterward signifies, as we have



have shewn, the more abundant grace we are made partakers of. And thus, although the blessings which all the World enjoyed, while the *Tabernacle* and *Temple* stood, flowed to Mankind from the Divine bounty and goodness; yet God was said to *dwell* onely among the *Israelites*, because he had a more especial care of that people, than of any other Nation in the World.

My designe in this Chapter was to shew that the beginnings and progress of that state whereby we are qualified for Heaven, are in the Scriptures ascribed to the Operations of the Holy Spirit; and that all Christian Vertues are the gifts and graces of God. I might now prove, by as convincing testimonies, that perseverance in the Faith, and obedience of the Gospel, is the effect of a Divine Operation in us: But this truth is so evidently consequent, from what the Scripture asserts concerning *God's dwelling in good men*, which I have largely enough discoursed of, that I reckon it needless to produce any further testimonies to confirm it.

Thus have I discharged what I promised in the close of the last Chapter; which was to prove, that those Christian Vertues in which the state of Regeneration consists, together with our improvement and perseverance in them, are particularly ascribed in the Scriptures to the Operations of the Holy Spirit.

And from what hath been thus proved, these things follow:

1. That he who is endued with these Vertues, hath the Spirit of God; for they are the effects of

of his grace: And to say that a man may be endued with them, and yet be void of Grace, is to contradict the Scriptures, which ascribe them, in whomsoever they are, to the Operations of the Holy Spirit.

2. And by consequence, it is an idle supposition that God will be displeased with us, though we be never so careful to do his Commands, and to increase in Christian Virtues, if all this while we have not the Spirit of God; for the former cannot be without the latter.

3. Wherefore also it is a vain thing to make our believing and obeying the Gospel, on the one side, and our having true Grace and the Spirit of God, on the other, distinct marks of a Regenerate state: For if Faith and Obedience are the fruits of the Holy Spirit within us; if they are *Grace*, as that signifies the performance of our duty, and the *effects* of *Grace*, as that signifies Divine Assistance; then having the Grace of God, and the Spirit of God, is not a mark of Regeneration, distinct from believing and obeying the Gospel; because this is *Grace* it self in the former, and is it self the onely mark of *Grace* in the latter sence of the word, *i. e.* of our having *the Spirit* of God.

And now I have not discoursed upon this subject out of the least suspicion that there are any in this Church who deny the Qualifications of a true Disciple of *Jesus* to be the graces of the Holy Spirit. For excepting Dr. *Owen*, and some of his party, and (as those who are acquainted with them say) the *Quakers*, I do not know of any in *England*, who may justly be suspected

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( to use one of the Doctor's phrases ) of being gone over into the Tents of the Pelagians. Nor was it merely to vindicate the Ministers of this Church, whose judgement in this matter I am acquainted with, something better than our Author seems to be, from the imputation of *Pelagianism*, which with so much clamour and railing he hath charged them withal : But principally to give those, who believe what the Scripture thus plainly declares, occasion to consider it again, and to lay it to heart ; since there can hardly be a more effectual encouragement to Piety and Virtue than this, that *God will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him* for all blessings needful for their eternal welfare : And nothing will render the wilful sinner more inexcusable, and more severely punishable, than this, that whilst he goes on in his wicked life, he does *despight unto the Spirit of Grace*.

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## C H A P. V.

*Concerning pretended Gifts of the Spirit.*

## S E C T. I.

**H**itherto I have shewn of what kinde those *Effects* are for which the Holy Spirit was in general promised by our Saviour, *Luke 11. 13.* and proved also that they are in the Scriptures severally ascribed to his Operations. Now upon the whole matter we cannot but conclude, that in respect of the *end* of this divine Grace, God hath made us a very large and bountiful promise thereof, and given thereby such an abundant demonstration of his good-will towards us, that indeed he desireth not the death of a sinner; but had rather he should turn and live, as we ought to acknowledge with our utmost Thanks and Praises.

But after all this, it will be pretended by *some men*, that if we say the Operations of the Holy Spirit are limited to those effects we have been speaking of, we confine the *Promise* within too narrow a compass, and do in effect deny several divine Graces and works of the Holy Spirit upon the Hearts of *God's people*, such as *darting* the true sence of Scripture into their mindes, *suggesting* words and matter to them when they pray *Ex-tempore*, and *giving* them *absolute* assurance that they shall be saved at last. Hence it is, that if we  
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take the liberty of dissenting from their sense of a place of Scripture, the next thing we hear is, that we want the *Illumination* of the Spirit; and all that we can say, is at once turned off for *carnal reasoning*. If we dare not pretend to any other than a conditional assurance of our Salvation, we are those that have not the *testimonies* of the Spirit: And if we make use of pious forms of Prayer, and other exercises of Devotion, we do not pray by the Spirit. Therefore I think my self obliged to enquire upon what grounds they pretend to these spiritual Gifts: But before I do so, I shall premise by way of Caution these following things. 1. That those dispositions which qualify us for a profitable understanding of the Scriptures, such as Teachableness, Humility, Attention, and Industry, are the graces of the Holy Spirit, and consequently, that our success in endeavouring after the knowledge of divine Truths, depends upon his blessing and grace. 2. That it is our duty to labour after a right understanding of our spiritual estate, and that this knowledge of it is a grace of the Holy Spirit. 3. That those affections which make our Prayers acceptable to God, such as love to God, trust in him, hatred of sin, zeal and fervency, and the like, are likewise the effects of divine Grace. All these things I heartily acknowledge; and they are no other things than what may be concluded easily, from the foregoing discourse concerning the graces of the Holy Spirit.

But that which I have some reason to question is this, Whether we can conclude that the Spirit will convey a right understanding of the Scripture into any mans minde by an immediate revelation of the meaning of it; or that he will give to  
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some men an absolute assurance of their salvation, while they live here upon their trial; or that he suggests to them by Inspiration what they say in their extemporary Prayers: For whatever he may do in this kinde, I do not finde that he hath promised any where so to do. And I think we are not to promise to our selves that divine Grace which God hath no where promised to us. And that he hath not promised these things, I shall shew, 1. By comparing the contrary pretence with that promise of our Saviour concerning the Holy Spirit, in *Luke 11. 13.* 2. By considering what ground there is for it, from other places of Scripture.

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1. By comparing the pretence with *Luke 11. 13.* and here I shall shew, that whatever countenance it may have from other Scriptures, it can have none from this, which (as I have already proved) contains a promise of such gifts as are needful to our eternal happiness.

1. As to that of coming to the sence of Scripture by ~~inherent~~ Revelation, I say that such a Revelation is not needful for us, to make us *wise unto salvation*; because those places of Scripture which are necessary to be understood by us, need no *infallible* Interpreter: for all Truths necessary to be known, are *plainly* delivered in the Scriptures; and there is no need of a new Revelation to acquaint us with the meaning of those Texts, the sence whereof is *plain* and obvious. There are indeed many passages hard to be understood in the Scriptures; but there is no necessity of an *Infallible* guide, or of New revelation to come to the sence of *them*, unless they were *themselves* necessary to be understood. If you say, that because *all Scripture is profitable*, the

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revelation of the true meaning of those Texts, at least, which have the greatest difficulties belonging to them, must be profitable also. I answer,

1. It does not follow in every particular, that because such a thing is profitable, therefore if I ask, God will give it; which you know was proved in the explication of St. *Luke's* Text, *Chap. 21. Sect. 2.* Wherefore if I pray onely that God may prosper my industry in endeavouring to understand such a difficult place, it does not follow from the promise in St. *Luke*, that God will grant my request in that particular: For he may give me something as good or better instead of it. As I may get advantage by understanding that place, so I may also get advantage by finding that after all I do not understand it; which may through the grace of God be improved by me into an occasion of more Humility, Modesty, and *Charity*; which, if St. *Paul* may be believed, is better than *Knowledge*, as my trying to understand did before excite me to Prayer and Industry. But much less does it follow that God will grant my request, if I pray yet more particularly, that the meaning of the difficult place may be revealed to me by immediate Inspiration: For,

2. Though that be profitable, yet 'tis profitable also to come to the knowledge of it by study, and the industrious use of means common to learned men, if I am a Teacher of others; or by the help of a *spiritual Guide*, if I am merely a Learner. And if I come either of these ways to the understanding of a difficult Text, God hath not been less good to me, for not communicating it to me by immediate revelation: Especially if it be considered,

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3. That if God giveth me the understanding of a difficult place, by blessing my industry in Reading, Hearing, Conferring with others, Meditating and Comparing place with place; this will in all probability be more useful *to others*, (not to say *to my self*) than if he gave it to me by immediate Illumination; because the knowledge which is gained the former way, may be more easily imparted to another, than that which might be obtained by the latter. For I can lead another into my knowledge of Scripture, which comes by the way of industry and study, by shewing *him* the reason that convinced me, and discovering the method of my coming to it. Now *Reason* you know is a thing common to you and me, and all Mankind: But I cannot go about to convince another of that truth, which I know onely by immediate *Inspiration*, unless I could add the *demonstration of power*, by doing Miracles to confirm my Doctrine; or had a minde to make my self as ridiculous, as those Champions of the *Roman Fraternity* make themselves, who say, their Church is *Infallible* in the *Conclusion*, though she may be *mistaken* in the *Premises*; which is as much as to say, that they are sure their Church is always in the right, though sometimes 'tis more than they can prove.

This may be said for coming to the knowledge of a difficult place by *study*, the using of which way is principally the duty of spiritual Guides. Now the advantage thereof being this, that they may easily communicate their knowledge to others; there will be still less reason for private Christians, who want leisure or ability to use the former means, to expect that God will teach them the true sence by *Inspiration*, since he may lead  
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them to it by his Ministers. And for this way it may be said further, that it is agreeable to the constitution of the Church, in which God hath established an Order of men, whose peculiar Office it is to *feed the flock of Christ*, Acts 20. 28. and that by taking care to instruct them out of the Word of God, not onely in necessary truths, but in such as are profitable too, so far as they are qualified to understand and improve by them. For some are to be *fed with milk onely*, and *not with meat*, being not able to bear it, 1 Cor. 3. 2. which words to my understanding imply, that God's Ministers are to consider and judge of the capacities of their people, and to instruct them in the meaning of those Scriptures which contain the most proper truths for them to understand: And consequently that these are bound to attend to the Ministry of their spiritual Guides, whom God hath set over them, and who are to judge what kinde of *meat they are able to bear*, what difficulties are fit to be propounded and explained to them, and what truths are profitable for them to be instructed in, besides those that are indispensibly necessary to be known. This is the Order which God hath appointed in his Church, for their edification who are least able to improve their knowledge in the Scriptures, by their own reading and studying of them, without further assistance: Therefore they must not expect knowledge by immediate Revelations, but by attending to their instructions, whom God hath appointed to watch for the good of their Souls.

The conclusion of all which is this; that neither God's Ministers, nor any of their Flock, neither the learned nor the unlearned, can ground any just pretence to the gift of Interpreting Scripture



pture by immediate Revelation, upon this promise in St. Luke, that God will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.

## SECT. 2.

It cannot be concluded from this promise, that an *absolute assurance* that we shall be saved, is obtainable by us, while we are upon the trial of our Faith and Obedience. My reason is, because *this assurance* is neither needful as a condition of Salvation, nor as a motive to our duty, nor as a means of comfort in the performance of it. Not as a condition of Salvation; for no such condition is required, but on the contrary we are exhorted to work out our Salvation with *fear and trembling*; and how that and the like exhortations can consist with supposing this Assurance to be a condition of being saved, I do not so well understand. Besides, the friends of the contrary persuasion do not, as far as I can discern, pretend to this Assurance by the Spirit, otherwise than by having also the *evidences* of their regenerate estate cleared up to their understandings: Wherefore a man must be actually in a *state of salvation*, before he can be assured that he shall be saved: but now if assurance be a necessary condition of being saved, then till we are assured, we are not in a state of Salvation: So that if ever we be saved upon these terms, we must either be assured, before we are assured; or be in a state of salvation, before we are in a state of salvation. Which inconvenience those *Divines* who at first placed the notion of justifying faith in this Assurance were so sensible of, that they generally substituted that new notion of *relying and revolving upon Christ*, in the room of the other.

And therefore I had not revived this Objection against it, but that I finde Dr. *Owen* taxing the want of this assurance, by the Name of *Unbelief* which will cast us under spiritual sloth and slumber; for he opposeth this Unbelief, to an assurance of our personal election, and the confidence we have from thence that we shall not utterly and finally miscarry. He doth not indeed say in plain terms that we are not true Believers till we are thus assured; but his words imply as much, though they look as if he was loth to speak it out; and therefore I shall trouble you no further with this matter.

2. It is not needful as a motive to our duty; for then the Scriptures do not contain sufficient inducements to obedience, since the promises of eternal Life there are all conditional; and by consequence, all the assurance we can have of our reward from thence is but *conditional*. Besides, a greater assurance than that, cannot be necessary to move us to well-doing in point of *Gratitude*; for we have infinite reason to love God, and be thankful to him, because we may escape the wrath to come upon the conditions of the Gospel: nor in point of *self-love*; for what consideration, regarding this matter, can make us more careful of our duty, than that our eternal welfare depends upon it? So that an absolute assurance of the event would be rather *unprofitable* for this purpose, because it would take off the force of a most considerable motive, wherewith the Scripture persuades us so frequently to Diligence and Watchfulness, and that is the motive of *Fear*. Our Saviour's exhortation would no longer be of use to us; *Fear him which hath power to cast into hell, yea, I say unto you, fear him, Luke 12. 5.* nor any of the

the like nature. He told his disciples, *What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch*; which implies, that whilst we are in this world, we are in a state of temptation and danger. Now as long as we are under such circumstances, Assurance would on the other hand be rather unprofitable, since it would supplant the usefulness and efficacy of so profitable a consideration, as that of God's angry Justice against Impenitent sinners, and back-sliding Christians. But Dr. Owen saith, *Men do but bewray their Ignorance* P. 530. *whilst they contend that the Assurance we speak of doth any way impeach, or doth not effectually promote the industry of Believers in all duties of Obedience. And to convince their ignorance, he produceth this admirable instance: Suppose a man that is on his Journey knoweth himself to be in his right way, and that passing on therein he shall certainly and infallibly come to his Journeys end, especially if he will a little quicken his speed, as occasion shall require; wilt you say that this is enough to make such a man careless and negligent, and that it would be much more to his advantage to be lost and bewildered in uncertain Paths and Ways, not knowing whither he goes, nor whether he shall ever arrive at his Journeys end? Common experience declares the contrary. And common sense might have informed him that this Similitude rather makes against his opinion than for it: For, it is one thing for a man to know himself to be in the right way, and that passing on therein he shall certainly and infallibly come to his Journeys end, i.e. on supposition he keeps on in the right way, which he knows himself to be in; and 'tis another thing to be infallibly assured that nothing can possibly turn him out of the way, whether he quickens his speed as occasion shall require, or whether he lets it alone. Now it is an Assurance of this kinde, about which (according to him) we bewray our*



Ignorance, by saying, it doth not effectually promote the industry of Believers; although there is this plain reason for it, that the former assurance leaves the Traveller under an obligation to quicken his speed, as occasion shall require, if he hopes to come to his Journey end; but the latter leaves him under none at all. Wherefore I leave the Doctor to judge what coherence there is between his Similitude, and that Reddition of it which he hath given us in these words: *It is that Soul alone ordinarily, which hath a comfortable assurance of Gods eternal immutable electing Love, and thence of the blessed end of its own course of obedience, i. e. who is assured of his personal Election, and consequently of his perseverance, that goeth on constantly and evenly in a course of holiness.* Here indeed he misseth the matter, by putting in the word *Ordinarily*; though he had no reason for it, having concluded just before, that impressions of Fear, together with all resolutions of Conversion grounded upon them, still come to nothing. But his Similitude does not conclude that absolute assurance he speaks of, to be either ordinarily or extraordinarily needful to quicken us in a course of holiness, because it supposeth the Travellers assurance of coming to his Journeys end to be but conditional.

But from the Similitude he proceeds to the testimony of Scripture, viz. Heb. 6. from the 10th Vers. to the end of the Chapter, where he saith, 'tis the very designe of the Apostle to explain and confirm this Doctrine, concerning the need of absolute assurance to move us to holiness; which he saith also is declared elsewhere, I suppose he means in his *Exercitations upon the Hebrews*; which Book I have not now by me; but the Bible I have,

have, and to that I will go. The words which I suppose he chiefly aims at in that Chapter, are these: *And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope, unto the end,* vers. 11. And let the meaning of them be judged by the main scope of the Apostle in that Chapter; which was to exhort the *Hebrews* to whom he wrote, to persevere in their Christian profession and conversation, and that by two Arguments; the former (from v. 4. to v. 9.) being the desperateness of their condition, who had revolted from their Christian profession: the latter (from v. 10. to the end) being the certainty of their reward who should persevere, as the Apostle was perswaded those *Hebrews* hitherto had done, vers. 9. whereof they had given good testimony by their liberality to the poor Christians, vers. 10. Now he would have them still be *followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises*, vers. 12. an example whereof they had in *Abraham*, who after he had patiently endured, obtained the promise, vers. 13. and then he proceeds to shew, that our hope of an Inheritance is grounded upon the *Word* and *Oath* of God, viz. that we shall obtain it if we be not *slothful*, but continue in *Faith* and *Patience*, as they did who now inherit. Wherefore his discourse here clearly proceeds upon this supposition, that they had no other assurance of their Reward, but upon condition of perseverance in their Duty; and then the immutability of God's promise was their security. This therefore the Apostle desired, that every one of them would shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end, i. e. that by Perseverance they might arrive to the enjoyment of what they hoped for. For, first of all, the full assurance of hope, was to be consequent upon their

*showing the same diligence*; for *περὶ τὴν πλεονεξίαν, &c.* is the same as if he had said, that we may obtain *the full assurance, &c.* Therefore it cannot from hence be concluded, that this Assurance, whatever is meant by it, was antecedently necessary to incite them to diligence. Wherefore, secondly, by this full assurance of hope, we are to understand that Assurance which is the reward of *showing the same diligence to the end*, i. e. the consummation of their hope, as *πλεονεξία τῆς ἐλπίδος* signifies; and then the meaning of the Text is this, that the Apostle would have them be diligent to the very last, that at last they might have *πλεονεξίαν, &c.* i. e. enjoy what they hoped for; or as it is express in the next Verse, *inherit the promises*. This is that sense of the place, to which, as I conceive, we are led by the words themselves, and by the scope of the Apostle in this Chapter: And therefore from hence it cannot be concluded, that the absolute Assurance Dr. Owen speaks of, is either ordinarily or extraordinarily needful to incite us to holiness; and notwithstanding this place we may affirm, that such assurance is more likely to *impeach* than to *promote the industry of Believers in all duties of obedience*. But the Doctor appeals from the ignorance of them that say thus, to the *experiences* of them that finde it otherwise, i. e. he appeals from us to himself and his party. Now if this were a good way of arguing, then we who are so sensible of our own infirmities, as to know our need of all sorts of Motives, not excepting that of the fear of God's threatnings, to make us watchful against the temptations of sin, may appeal to our own *experiences*, for the truth of what we say, from the *ignorance* of them that say the contrary. But there is no necessity that you or we should be trusted in this matter, when the Word of God



is before us, which doth so vehemently urge us to fear him that can destroy both Body and Soul in Hell. Wherefore notwithstanding all the contempt you cast upon serving God out of this *principle*, we see our Saviour thought it was needful for us, and therefore we have good reason to believe that God will not be angry with us, because we are afraid to provoke his angry Justice; nor disregard our care to do his will ever the more, because we are moved thereunto by Fear, since it is an argument that he himself perswades us withal; especially since the Scripture makes those divine benefits, which challenge our utmost gratitude; and that goodness of God towards us, which is so powerful an argument to make us love him with all our hearts, a reason also why we should fear him. For if we may believe the Psalmist, we are to fear God, because there is *forgiveness with him*, Psal. 130. 4. *i. e.* because the abuse of his Mercy will yet more provoke his Displeasure, and bring a more *dreadful* punishment upon us. Lastly, since the Scripture tells us that *we are not* onely to begin, but to *perfect holiness in the fear of God*; and that too, in consideration of those *promises* whereby we are encouraged to cleanse our selves from *all filthiness* of Flesh and Spirit, 2 Cor. 7. 1. all this makes me wonder at your presumption in saying, that by the want of your absolute Assurance, *Duties are discouraged, spiritual Endeavours and Diligence are impaired; Delight in God weakened, and Love cooled*; when the Scripture is so plainly against you. And for your saying that we *bewray our Ignorance*, while we make the fear of God's threatnings, lest they fall upon us, needful to *quicken our industry in all duties of obedience*; might we not requite you by saying more justly, that you do but *bewray your confidence* in making

making your self wiser than *Christ*, who thought we stood in need of this argument, and would have it take impression in our mindes, as I have already shewn you? *It is*, you say, *very sad that any man should so far proclaim his inexperience and unacquaintedness with the nature of Gospel-grace, the Genius of the New Creature, &c. as to be able thus to argue*, viz. that the assurance you speak of tends to carelesness, &c. But it is more sad, that men under a pretence of greater acquaintance with Gospel-grace, should take upon them to undermine the usefulness of so excellent a Grace of the Gospel, as the fear of God's threatnings. Now as to that experience you have of the nature of Gospel-grace, and of the New Creature, and which makes you so confident, I have a good while considered what it should be, and cannot finde a more probable sence of your words than this, That you finde your selves made *new Creatures*, and put on to good works by an *irresistible* grace, which is the darling opinion you contend so fiercely for in your Book. And if that be your meaning, and your meaning be true, then I confesse there is no need of the Argument of Fear to constrain such as you: And I will adde also, neither can there be any need of any motive whatsoever to make you as good as you say, and, as, we hope, some of you are.

3. Neither is this Assurance needful to encourage and comfort us while we are performing our duty: nor must the want of it needs cast us into *Perplexities, Discouragement, and Despondency*, as the Doctor will have it. For the Scripture supposeth that the conditional promises of the Gospel are a sufficient ground of comfort, while we are careful to keep the Commandments of God; and

and if we are not, Comfort is a thing that belongs not to us. St. John saith, *We declare the Gospel unto you, that you may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be FULL.* If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth, 1 John 1.3,4,6. Now that joy which is full, is encouragement enough to our duty, and yields sufficient comfort in the performance of it: but if we may believe the Apostle, this fulness of Joy may be grounded upon the conditional terms of the Gospel, viz. that if we do not *walk in darkness, we have fellowship with God*; if we obey the Gospel, God will love us; and if we persevere therein, he will save us eternally: wherefore it may be had without absolute assurance that we shall be saved. The Gospel will afford us no other comfort than that which depends upon the performance of our duty; and seeing it hath given us abundant encouragement by the promises of God's Grace, to be diligent in our duty, it hath also abundantly provided for our comfort. But 'tis a most unreasonable thing to pretend that we cannot begin to serve God with any comfort, till we have a *comfortable assurance*, as the Doctor very truly calls it, that we are *personally* elected, and that it is absolutely impossible for us to miscarry: for this is a comfort proper onely for them that have finished their course, and are now ready to receive the Crown of Righteousness. "Suppose a good man  
 "should employ his Servant in a business of some  
 "difficulty, promising him sufficient means to go  
 "through with it; and for his reward, a considerable inheritance in his Family: If after he has  
 "taken the charge, and before he has well begun  
 it,



" it, he should come to his Master, and fall down  
 " at his Feet, intreating him to settle that Inheri-  
 " upon him beforehand, and to give him an ab-  
 " solute Estate in it, promising upon his ingenuity  
 " that he would not be the less careful of his  
 " work, but think himself rather the *more obli-*  
 " *ged* to perform it to the utmost of his power;  
 " sure his Master would tell him that he desired an  
 " unreasonable thing, since he had never found  
 " him worse than his word; and there was some  
 " reason to suspect that his impatience was a signe  
 " of no honest intention in him; but that for  
 " his own part, he would give him no better as-  
 " surance of his reward, than upon condition, lest  
 " afterward he must get somebody else to do his  
 " work. Now if for all this, the loitering Ser-  
 " vant should lie groveling upon the ground, wring-  
 " ing his Hands, and beating his Breast, protesting  
 " that he cannot go about his work, nor so much  
 " as think of it with any joy, till he hath full  
 " assurance that fair Estate he is so enamoured  
 " withal, shall be his, *whether he doth his service re-*  
 " *quired of him, or whether he doth it not*; that no-  
 " thing will comfort him, and keep up his Heart  
 " from sinking within him, but such a *comfortable*  
 " *Assurance*; that he is all over lame and stiff, and  
 " cannot stir a foot, nor move a hand in his Ma-  
 " ster's service, as long as he hath any the least fear  
 " of missing that Reward: By this time we may  
 " suppose the good man to have a better opinion  
 " of his Servant than to think him a Knave; but  
 " he would certainly conclude that he was not ve-  
 " ry wise. The Parallel is so easie, that I need not  
 make it. Indeed if a man be perswaded that it  
 was the purpose of God from all eternity, to  
 bring a few men to eternal Life by an irresistible  
 power, and to leave the rest to unavoidable ruine;

he

he can no more hope to obtain the favour of God by doing what he can to please him, than to reverse the Decrees of Heaven. Wherefore if he understands his own principles, he must needs be under a great Agony, till he becomes assured that he is one of that happy number, whom nothing, no not *sin it self*, can separate from the love of God. But if we entertain honourable thoughts of God, as we have great reason to do; if we believe that he seriously calls upon us to repent, and would have us to be saved; and that he is ready to supply us with *Grace sufficient*, 2 Cor. 12. 9. then upon our care to please God in all things, we shall never want so much comfort as we need, *i. e.* the joy of well-doing, which is the testimony of a good Conscience.

Wherefore since an absolute assurance that we shall be saved is needful, neither as a condition of Salvation, nor as a motive to Holiness, nor as a means of Comfort; I may conclude also, that neither is this one of those Graces, which our Saviour hath told us, God will give to them that ask him.

### SECT. 3.

Lastly, *that* promise giveth us no reason to expect that the Holy Spirit will dictate *extemporary* Prayers to us. For, 1. Such Prayers themselves are not necessary to the obtaining of our requests; for had that been so, then certainly we should have been admonish'd in the Scriptures to pray *Extempore* (as they call it) as well as to pray at all; and to beware of Book-prayers, and the use of Forms, as much as of neglecting the Duty altogether,

gether, or performing it in a careless slothful manner. And this the rather, because Forms of Prayer and Thanksgiving were used in the Jewish Church; and because also the modesty of many good Christians, and the inabilities of many more, would naturally prompt them to the use of so ready a help to devotion, as pious and useful Forms of Prayer are. But so far are we from finding any Command in Scripture to pray upon sudden invention, that we finde no preference given to this way, above the use of Forms, but rather the contrary; for when our Saviour taught his Disciples to pray, he enjoyned them the use of a Form, *When ye pray, say, Our Father, &c. Luke 11.* But

2. Not to contend for the usefulness of Forms of Prayer, above leaving the performance of this duty to extemporary effusions, but admitting the advantage lay on the side of the latter, as some men perswade themselves; I affirm, that the suggestions of the Holy Spirit are not necessary to the conception or utterance of such Prayers. For first, they are not necessary to dictate *what things* we are to pray for, since the Holy Scriptures may abundantly supply us with the knowledge of *them*. Therefore I see no reason why Dr. Owen should say with so much anger, *that the Spirit of God (let the proud carnal world despise it whilst they please, and at their peril) doth graciously in the Prayers of Believers, carry out and act their Souls and Minds in Desires and Requests, which, for the matter of them, are far above their natural contrivances and invention.* This is somewhat obscure; but I would know what requests those are, which for the matter of them, are above your natural contrivance and invention: If they be agreeable to the Word of God,



God, as I suppose you will say they are, then either you knew them to be so, before you pray'd, or you knew it not: If you did, you have no reason to say that the matter of *these requests* was above your *natural contrivance and invention*; if you mean thereby, as I think you do, that when you were praying, you could not possibly have thought of those requests, without a supernatural suggestion; for you confess that you knew well enough before, that you were to pray for such things as then come to your minde. But if you knew them not, then either you prayed for such things as you did not then know to be agreeable to God's Word, or else you must suppose that the Holy Spirit, which then gave you the first notice of them, did immediately reveal to you that they were: And yet you said just before, *I do not think that the Spirit worketh supplications in us by an immediate supernatural divine Afflatus, so as he inspir'd the Prophets of old, who oft-times understood not the things uttered by themselves.* Now that Revelation is as immediate and supernatural, as the Inspiration of the Prophets was; and to make all even, you say elsewhere, that (let prophane and ignorant persons, whilst they please, deride what they understand not, nor are able to disprove) the Holy Spirit of God doth guide Believers in and by the working and experience of Faith, to pray for those things the depths of whose mysteries they cannot comprehend. So that if you neither know them before, nor understand them afterward, I think you may lay claim to the *Afflatus of the old Prophets* upon a double Title, by your own account. Now I shall be so far from deriding your pretence, that I shall not go about to disprove it; but only tell you, that we are not bound to believe you to be Inspired men, unless you could prove it by some evident divine Testimony;

for

for want of which, you again appeal to your Experiences, and let us know withal, *that he who has not experience hereof, i. e. of having the matter of his Prayers suggested to him by the Spirit, is a greater stranger to these things than will at length be unto his advantage*; which any man may say, who speaks more than he understands. All that I contend for, is, that the matter of our Prayers needs not to be dictated by Inspiration, and that because the Spirit teacheth us by the written Word of God, what we may, and what we ought to pray for. Nor,

2. The words in which we pray: for a ready use of our Mother-tongue will serve us with them freely enough; so that a competent understanding of the chief Heads of Religion, and the retaining in memory of a certain number of Scripture-phrases and Passages of holy Writ, proper to be converted into Petitions, together with a tolerable readiness of uttering ones thoughts in proper words, will in some measure furnish a man with this gift; and being thus qualified, he shall not need to have the matter or the words of his Prayers dictated to him by the Holy Spirit, any more than of an ordinary discourse with his Neighbour upon a subject which he is used to speak of. But if he hath over and above, a warm Invention, and a voluble Tongue, and a good share of Assurance in himself, especially if he be apt to be heated with his own thoughts and expressions, he is then qualified to excel in the way of *extemporary* praying, and to pass for one that hath a double measure of the Spirit, with them who are apt to ascribe all Heat and Eloquence in matters of Religion to a divine Principle. I do not speak this to undervalue any man's abilities in

in this kinde, but onely to shew that they may be set too high. As for them that do so, they may undeceive themselves by observing the very Prayers of those persons whose gifts this way are most remarkable; for although these men are sometimes pleased to decry the *use* of Forms as not *favouring of the Spirit*, yet it is plain enough, that their own Prayers, as spiritual as they look, may be as purely Humane as the Prayers of a Book are by them judged to be. For it is evident that they tie up themselves to those usual *Topicks* of Prayer, and Heads of Devotion, according to which Book-prayers (as they call them) are framed. They usually begin with the Invocation of God, by the acknowledgement of his Attributes, and then they run through the *common places* of Confession, Petition, and Thanksgiving, which are the subjects that furnish set Forms of Prayer. They confess the same Sins, they beg the same Graces, they praise God for the same Blessings in all their Prayers. Now this is that which I suppose none of them will deny; and then I think they must confess, that their Prayers, as to the *matter* of them, are as formal as those of the Liturgy. But further, as the matter of their Prayers is confined to certain Heads; so for the most part they use the *same expressions*, onely with this condition, that they are laid in with such good store of them, that they need not use them all at once, but may keep some against another time. And thus indeed they do not tie up themselves to a *form of Words*, because they have as many Forms to use, as may be made by the shifting and transposing of those *Phrases* which they have in *stock*; and so many Forms they have more or fewer, according as that stock increases more or less. And thus as we pray out of our Books, so do they out of their Memo-



ries; and the difference between their way and ours (for I speak now of those that do not use to talk idly and extravagantly in their extemporary Prayers) is this, that ours hath the advantage of Safety, and theirs of Popularity and Ostentation.

But I am not able to divine what that is in *Extemporary* praying, as *that* is distinguish'd from using a set Form, which must needs be ascribed to the immediate suggestion of the Spirit: The *matter* of such Prayers is certainly the most considerable, and the knowledge of that we see may come another way; which seem'd to be the mind too of the late *Assembly*, who although they threw aside the Book of *Common-prayers* to make way for Extemporary Performances, yet thought fit to give the Minister a *Directory* for the *Matter*, without leaving him to be guided in that by the suggestion of the Holy Ghost: which made some men think they might e'ne as well have prescribed a *set Form*, unless they intended to leave the meaner office of supplying him with words, to the Holy Spirit. But the words and phrases, as I have shewn you, may come from a more familiar Principle: And then there is nothing left, but that shifting and changing of places, with them, which makes the great show of variety. But this is so unworthy to be ascribed to a divine principle, that I may conclude extemporary Prayers, allowing them to be never so useful and profitable, need not to be dictated by Inspiration; and therefore no such Inspiration was promised by our Saviour when he promised the Gift of the Holy Spirit to all his Disciples.

Thus have I shewn that neither of these three things

things come under the promise in St. *Luke* 11. 13. For they are not Gifts of that kinde which are there promised to them that *ask the Spirit*. And I adde, it may be strongly presumed, that they are promised nowhere else, since they do not fall under this general promise of *the Spirit*, which comprehends all the rest.

But because there are some men so vehemently perswaded that the Holy Spirit is given for these purposes, that they reckon it little better than Blasphemy to gainsay it; I shall proceed to those places of Scripture upon which such mighty confidence is grounded, to see whether they afford any reason for it.

#### SECT. 4.

And first, as to those testimonies which are alledged out of the Bible, in favour of interpreting or understanding Scripture by the immediate revelation of the Spirit; I refer the Reader wholly to Dr. *Hammond's Postscript concerning New Light, and divine Illumination, annexed to his Paraphrase, &c. upon the New Testament*; where they are all considered, and shewn to infer no such thing as is desired to be concluded from them. But if after all, any man should say that he knows by the Light of the Spirit, that Interpretation which Dr. *Hammond* hath given of those Texts, to be nothing better than *carnal Reasoning*, and come over with Dr. *Owen's* talk of *the Natural Man*, and the impossibility of understanding the spiritual sence of Gospel-truths, without the *Almighty Illumination* of the Spirit; I confess it will prove a matter of as great difficulty to reply to such a pretender, as it

is to finde out a way to convince a *Quaker* : For what success can any man promise himself by replying to a confident Enthusiast, who perpetually appeals from the most evident reasons, the plainest testimonies of Scripture, and the most rational inferences from them, to the testimony of the Spirit? However, this I will venture to say, that if it were granted impossible to understand *these Texts* without that New Light, which the Papists call an *Infallible Spirit*, and Dr. Owen and his party an *Almighty work of the Holy Ghost*, for in effect they are both the same thing; then it must be granted withal, that these Texts are impertinently produced, to convince us who do not pretend to this *Infallible Spirit*, that there are a sort of men upon whom God bestows that *priviledge*. For that theirs is the true sence, cannot be proved to us, but by rational means, *i. e.* either by arguing from the *original* words, or the Context, or parallel places, or the like; or else by some clear divine testimony proper to convince us that they in particular are inspired, such as real and undoubted Miracles. This latter way is pretended to onely by the *Papists*; and though the frauds they have been deprehended in, sufficiently shew those amongst them that have raised the noise of their Miracles to be Impostors; yet it is to be acknowledged that they pretend to offer a rational *means* of Conviction, that their Church interprets the Scripture by an infallible Spirit; *which* the men I am at present speaking of do not offer in the least. As for the former way of convincing us by rational evidence from the Text it self, it is that which we are ready to submit to, and then I desire Dr. *Hammond's* interpretation may be considered. But if they neither use this way nor the other, nor any like it, it is an absurd thing to pro-



produce those testimonies of Scripture at all to convince us by them ; because upon these terms it is utterly impossible they should convince us, till we have received that New Light which they themselves pretend to. And this is all that I can hope to bring them to, *viz.* to confess their own impertinency in offering any testimony of Scripture for the justifying of their pretence ; and that when all is done they have nothing to say, but *the Spirit* tells them this is the true sence and meaning of Scripture, without enabling them to make it appear to any body else. And so we are to let them go, either for errant Hypocrites, or rank Enthusiasts, whom the State hath reason to be jealous of, lest they should have some dangerous design against the Government, or be prompted to Sedition and Rebellion by the heats of their own fancies, or the suggestions of the Devil, which by an Enthusiast may be so easily mistaken for the Impulses of the Holy Ghost.

If last of all it should be said, that although God hath not promised this Inspiration we are speaking of, yet for ought we know, he may do more than he hath promised, and reveal the true sence of what passages in Scripture he pleaseth to whom he pleaseth : I answer, that as I am no way obliged to contradict this supposition, so withal I must adde, 1. That supposing a man to be thus inspired, he cannot prove to another that he is so, otherwise than by Miracles ; which if he doth not, neither can he justly expect to convince another that the sence revealed to him is the true sence, otherwise than by such rational means as he must have used if it had not been revealed : and 2. That therefore if *one* man hath nothing to say in conclusion for his interpretation of a place of

Scripture, but that the Spirit led him to it, and that to put any other sense upon it, is the fruit of carnal reasoning, and of the wisdom of the flesh, and a signe of Unregeneracy, and the state of a natural man that hath not the Spirit of God, which is always Dr. Owen's last refuge; and another plainly shews, either by the words themselves, or by the designe of the discourse to which they belong, or by some other way apt to convince a rational man that the foresaid meaning does not belong to them, but one that is different from it: In this case I say the former is convinced to pretend falsely to Inspiration; and in plain English, he must be a very Fool that will prefer his interpretation before the other. And so much for that matter.

## SECT. 5.

2. The principal passages of Scripture, which seem to imply *Assurance* to be a gift bestowed upon the regenerate by the Holy Spirit, are two: The first I shall mention is that of St. Paul to the Ephesians, *Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption*, Eph. 4. 30. Now by the Believers being sealed, &c. some have thought that a testimony of the Spirit, whereby they are absolutely assured that they shall be saved, must needs be meant. But first, the words are fairly capable of another meaning, viz. that the gifts of the Holy Spirit, bestowed upon Believers, were an evidence that God was now preparing them for the Kingdom of Heaven, since upon their believing he had blest them with so many advantages in order thereunto, and therefore that he had now a peculiar right to their obedience: For this we know is one use of sealing.

to distinguish that which of right belongs to our selves, from what is *common*. Thus are all Believers marked out for God's *portion* and *peculiar*, by the eminent advantages of the Gospel which he hath made them partakers of: and therefore are they said to be sealed by the Holy Spirit, because the Gospel is a divine Revelation, and the ministration of the Gospel is the *ministration of the Spirit*. Thus when it is said that *God the Father hath sealed Christ*, John 6. 27. the meaning is, that by the descent of the Holy Ghost upon him, he owned him to be his Son, that great Prophet, who was to declare the will and pleasure of God to men. In like manner God's giving his Holy Spirit to them that believe in *Christ*, is, as St. Chrysostome speaks excellently upon this place, his *marking them out to be a Royal Flock*; it is a token of their peculiar designation to the service and obedience of God, and a *pledge of that Inheritance*, 2 Cor. 1. 22. they shall be rewarded with, if they walk as becomes the Gospel. But all this is very far from inferring an absolute assurance in them who are thus marked out for God's people, that they shall infallibly persevere in that duty, which belongs to their peculiar relation to God, and the performance whereof is the condition of receiving the Inheritance. And therefore such assurance cannot be proved to be spoken of in this place. But, 2. The words are not onely capable of that sense which I have offered; but their coherence with the foregoing and following verses, and the force and reason of St. Paul's Exhortation, requires it: *Let him, saith he, that stole, steal no more; and let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, &c. Let all bitterness and wrath, &c. be put away.* The Argument wherewith he enforceth these Exhortations is this, that otherwise they



would *grieve the Holy Spirit, by which they were sealed, &c. i. e.* they would plainly contradict the end for which God had bestowed the gifts of the Spirit upon them, who were thus marked out to be his Servants and Children. This would be to grieve the Holy Spirit, *i. e.* to bereave themselves of his gracious presence, and to come in danger of being excluded for ever out of the Rest of God; as it was with the Israelites in the Wilderness, with whom God was *grieved* forty years; and he swore in his wrath, that they *should not enter into his rest*, Heb. 3. And the note which the Apostle makes thereupon is this, that *we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end*, vers. 14. *i. e.* if we hold on resolutely and patiently in the course of a Christian life. It is the like Argument which the Apostle useth more *concisely* to the *Ephesians*, when he dissuades them from impure and evil courses, lest they grieve the Holy Spirit of God, and by consequence never enter into that Rest God had designed for them. But this consideration could have been of no force at all, if they had been absolutely sure of their Inheritance, as some from these words have pretended they were; whereas it must be granted to be very prevailing, on supposition, that by *sealing* is here meant, their being, as it were, consecrated to a life of obedience by the Spirit of God which they were made partakers of; for then they would finde little excuse, and a greater punishment for their unchristian practices, if, being so greatly obliged, they should prove unthankful and disobedient.

The second place is that of St. Paul to the *Romans*, *The Spirit it self beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God*, Rom. 8. 16.

But,

But, 1. This testimony of the Spirit, is that *publick Testimony* which was given by the Spirit, that true Christians are the Sons of God; for it is said in the former Verse that they had *received the spirit of Adoption*; which being opposed to the *spirit of Bondage*, shews the Apostle's meaning to be this, that the Christians were the *Children of the promise*, and *ἐν τῇ ἐλευθέρῃ*, of the *Free-woman*, as he expresseth it, *Gal. 4. 28.* whereas the Jews, those of them that were *under the Law*, answered the condition of *Ishmael*, who was *ἐν τῇ παιδίσκῃ*, the Son of the *Bond-woman*, to whom there was no promise of an Inheritance. Now that none but true Christians were the Sons of God, and Heirs of the promised Inheritance, was that which was testified against the Jews, by the Miracles and supernatural gifts of the Apostles and primitive Believers, *i. e.* by the testimony of the Spirit. And then this Text is very far from intending any immediate testimony of the Holy Ghost to our mindes that we are God's Children. And yet, 2. All that is here affirmed regards onely our present state, that we *are the Children of God*; which if we be, it is certainly possible for us to be assured of it: nay, we cannot be ignorant of our spiritual condition, without our own fault, since we have so plain a rule to try our selves by as the Word of God; *By this we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.* Now our keeping of God's Commandments, is that which our own *spirit* or Conscience must *witness*; and then upon this condition the Revelations of the Gospel (wherein, to be sure, is the witness of the Spirit) witness to us that *we are the children of God*; and *if children, then heirs, &c.* All which may very well be, without our believing that it is absolutely impossible for us to forfeit our Inheri-

Vid. *Knowl.*  
of Jesus  
Christ, p. 389.

tance

sence by any future miscarriage ; and therefore from this place it cannot be concluded, that such assurance is given by the Holy Spirit.

## SECT. 6.

3. For the pretence of uttering the suggestions of the Spirit in *Extemporary Prayers*, I know likewise but two places of Scripture commonly urged in favour of it. The former is St. Paul's saying, *I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also*, 1 Cor. 14. 15. Which I confess is a Text that I never heard produced for this pretence, but by those that have nothing but mere zeal to defend their opinions withal, I mean some of the people that follow Dr. Owen and his Brethren of the Separation : I do not wonder that after they have been possessed with a strong persuasion that the Spirit of God helps them to Words, or Sense, or both, in their Prayers, they conceit this Text to be a *proof* for their purpose ; for the words sound that way, if a man believes what they do, about *Extemporary Prayers*, before-hand. But I have often wondered that they who take upon them to be their Guides, who pretend to learning, and if they minded the Text at all, can hardly be ignorant that the *praying by the Spirit* there meant, was using the gift of Tongues in Prayer ; and the *praying by the Understanding*, was praying in a Language understood by the people ; that they, I say, should suffer their people to run away so long together, with a belief that this Text gives them Authority to expect that the Spirit of God will take care they shall speak good sense in their *Extemporary Prayers* ; this is that which I cannot but admire. I do not say they are all so dishonest ;



dishonest; but I have reason to think that many of them are; and they cannot deny it, I suppose, unless they grant that we are acquainted with the talk of their Followers, better than they themselves are.

But dismissing this place, which is so very wide from the purpose which it is produced for, I proceed to the second, which indeed carries a more likely appearance; and in the judgement of Dr. Owen, contains a sufficient proof, that the Spirit of God carries out the mindes of Believers in requests, which for the matter of them, are far above their natural contrivance and invention, i. e. that when Believers venture to pray *Extempore*, the Spirit of God prompts them as they go along, to pray for such things, as otherwise could never have come to their mindes. For his words signifie thus much at least; if not, that the very knowledge of those things is communicated to them at that very instant before they pray for them, and that by immediate Revelation. The place is this: *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit it self maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the Hearts, knoweth what is the minde of the Spirit; because he maketh intercession for the Saints according to the will of God, Rom. 8. 26, 27.* I shall endeavour to shew the true meaning of these words, and leave it to the Reader, whether the foresaid opinion of the Doctor can be concluded from them. His other thoughts of this matter I shall not pretend to confute, because I do not so well comprehend what he means, viz. when he tells us with respect to the subject of Prayer, *the sanctified Heart*, that by the *Groans which cannot be uttered*,  
are

P. 385.

are meant, that *bent, frame, inclination, and acting of the Inward man in prayer from the power of the Spirit, which they themselves in whom they are wrought, do not fathom nor reach the depth of*; unless he means that a man may desire the Graces of God with *inexpressible vehemence*, and yet not understand that he does so: If he intends this, I need onely to tell him, that because these groanings are unutterable, it follows not that they are unintelligible. If he intends it not, I do not *fathom nor reach the depth* of his meaning. Again when he tells us, with respect to the object of Prayer, that the *mysterious things which Believers pray for, are now made nigh, now realized unto them*; I do not well know whether he means *now* at their Prayers, or *now* at some other time before. If when they are praying, 'tis somewhat hard to conceive that the Spirit *represents the truth of those things in and by the Word*, as he saith; if at some other time before, then certainly the *things themselves* were represented before too, and they knew they were to pray for these things; and then it is above my apprehension how the matter of their Prayers should be *far above their natural contrivance and invention*, either just before, or while they are praying. It seems strange likewise, that by the Prayers of *men low and weak in their notional apprehension of things*, we may see them led into *Communion with God in the highest and holiest mysteries of his Grace*; and that they have an experience of the life and power of the things themselves in their own Hearts. For what have we to see this by, but their Words, and Gestures? &c. But it is past my reach, how by these helps we can see that which he told us before, *God onely sees, viz. the fervent workings of the New Creature, when acted by the Holy Ghost in supplications*. And to do him right,  
he

P. 349.

he seems not to ascribe the extemporary utterance, but onely the present conception of matter, to the Spirit. Other observations of this kinde might be made, which I shall not clog the Reader withal. But upon the whole matter, *Rom. 8. 26, 27.* seems to me much easier to be understood than any thing that he saith with relation to it; and unless he shall please to explain himself further, one may sooner, I think, understand *St. Paul* than him, though there be considerable difficulties in the Text which need an Interpreter.

Therefore I shall, 1. Consult the sence of good Authors, and such as the Doctor, I hope, will not take upon him to say were *Proud, Carnal, Ignorant, P. 349, 385.* and *Profane persons*; words which he throws so fiercely about him whilst he is discoursing of Prayer, the very mention of which one would think should have taught him more meekness. 2. I shall compare what they say with that which seems to me to be the designe of *St. Paul* in the foregoing and following Verses. This I take to be a good way, both to understand the Text, and to avoid the Doctor's displeasure, if we should not altogether agree about the meaning of it at last.

*St. Chrysostom* saith, that in those words, *Like- Cryst. in Rom. 8. H. 14.*  
*wise the Spirit helpeth our infirmities; for, &c.* *St. Paul* instructs us not always to judge those things profitable which seem to be so, λογισμοῖς ἀνθρώπων, to mere natural Reason: For it was likely that they who suffered so many evils, wished a relaxation, asking it as a grace from God. But saith he, do not think that would be best, which presently appears to be so: upon this very account we need divine assistance; for man knoweth little or nothing what is for his welfare; wherefore the Apostle saith, *We know not, &c.*  
 And



And then he shews this was St. Paul's case too, when he prayed that the Thorn in the Flesh might be removed, 2 Cor. 12. but obtained it not: For he proves that this Thorn were the <sup>miseries</sup>, and <sup>miseries</sup> the Dangers and Persecutions he lay under.

August. Ep.  
ad Probam,  
121. c. 14.

In like manner St. Austin tells us, It is not to be believed that St. Paul, or those to whom he spake, knew not the Lord's Prayer; why should he therefore say, We know not what to pray for as we ought? but because temporal afflictions are mostly profitable, either to cure us of the swelling of Pride, or, &c. but we, not considering this, desire to be exempted from them. From which ignorance the Apostle shews himself not to have been free, when lest he should be exalted by the abundance of Revelations, there was given to him a Thorn in the Flesh, a Messenger of Satan to buffet him; and he besought the Lord that it might depart from him, herein not knowing what to pray for as he ought—Therefore in these tribulations, which may be either profitable or hurtful, we know not what to pray for, i. e. whether it be better to have them removed or not; and yet, because they are hard to be born, we do as men altogether desire to have them removed. And not long after he saith, The Spirit causeth the Saints to intercede with unutterable groans, inspiring them with the desire of a thing yet unknown, which they patiently expect; for how should that which is desired, be uttered when it is yet not known?

Ad Probam,  
c. 15.  
De Anim.  
& c. Orig.  
Lib. 4.

Hierom in  
locum.

To the same purpose St. Hierom saith, the Spirit helpeth our Infirmities, that we should not desire earthly but heavenly things; we know not what to pray for: They are commonly hurtful things which we think profit us, and therefore our desires are not granted—as he saith himself elsewhere: For this thing

thing I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me. He maketh intercession for the Saints. Here, saith he, St. Paul by the Spirit, means the grace of the Spirit: For the Spirit intercedes, because he maketh us to pray with unutterable groans, as God is said to try us that he might know us; that is, that he might make us know our selves. And to intercede according to the will of God, is to desire Holy and not Secular things.

Thus St. Ambrose (if he was the Author of those Commentaries:) We know not, &c. for we are deceived, thinking those things will profit us which we desire, when they are not profitable: and here he useth the same instance likewise of St. Paul's desiring that the Messenger of Satan might depart from him; to which he addes that of James and John desiring the pre-eminence in Christ's Kingdom, who asked they knew not what. But withal he supposeth, that the Spirit doth properly intercede with God in our behalf, that we may have such things as are profitable for us.

Ambrose  
Com. in  
R m.

Theodoret saith, the Apostle speaks to this purpose; Pray not to be delivered from troubles, for you know not what is profitable for you, as God doth who governs all. Resigne up your selves to him that holds the Helm of the Universe, &c. But, saith he, by the Spirit is meant the grace of the Spirit, which is given to them that believe; for being thereby stirred up, we pray more earnestly, &c. And he addes, that the Apostle spake this from the experience of what he had suffered; [referring probably to that passage concerning the Messenger of Satan, so often already mentioned.]

Theod. in  
Rom.

To mention no more, Origen thus paraphraseth upon

Orig. in Ep.  
ad Rom. Lib.  
7.

upon the Text: Sometimes through infirmity we desire things contrary to our welfare; as a sick man would have the Physician prescribe him what is agreeable to his present appetite, instead of that which is for his health; so in this infirm state of ours, we ask sometimes what is not expedient for us. And I [Paul] who had the Messenger of Satan given me, thrice asked, &c. not knowing what I asked; and received this answer, My grace is sufficient for thee— The Flesh lusteth against the Spirit; but when the Spirit of God seeth our spirit striving against the Flesh, he reacheth out his help— Now, saith he, if any one can finde out a more sublime sence than this, let him enjoy it to himself. But they are to be admonish'd who desire of God the prosperity, &c. of this life; because in these respects they know not what to pray for as profitable; for it often happens that these present advantages, &c. tend to the harm of the soul. And therefore that is to be minded by us which we are taught in the Lord's Prayer; Thy Will be done. As to that clause, who searcheth the Hearts, he saith, it shews that God regardeth the minde more than the words wherewith we pray. As to the unutterable groans, he saith, How can that which the Spirit of God speaketh to God, be uttered by us, when sometimes that which our own spirit feels and understands cannot be expressed by us in words?

Now I believe we shall not readily meet with a place of Scripture containing any matter of difficulty, in the interpretation whereof the Fathers do more unanimously conspire, than they do in their sence of this. I could easily have added more Authorities to the same purpose, if I had pleased; but I hope these will be sufficient to satisfie any sober person, that that interpretation of this Text which I prefer before Dr. Owen's, is not fit to be call'd pre-



presently the *reasoning* of the *carnal* and *unregenerate* man ; for I shall offer no other than what is agreeable to the sence of these Christian Writers, who may with the help of a little charity, I think, pass for *regenerate* men.

The sum of what they say towards the interpretation of the Text is this :

1. That *we ought* in the genetal to pray for what is best for us.

2. That in some cases *we know not* what is best ; and they are those which concern our present state in this world, with regard to afflictions on the one side , and ease and prosperity on the other. And thus St. *Austin* prevents that Objection of the Christians knowing the *Lords Prayer*, by restraining the *ignorance* of what we are to pray for to the matter of temporal afflictions:

3. That our infirmities here mentioned , consist in this ignorance, together with our proness to desire Health, Riches, and Ease, &c. and the natural aversation we have to Pain and Trouble, when as yet God may see that the *former* will be hurtful, the *latter* profitable for us:

4. By the Spirit's making intercession for us, they all understand his exciting us to pray for our selves, excepting St. *Ambrose*, who supposeth the Spirit to intercede *properly* for us, that God would bestow better things on us, than we sometimes ask for our selves : and *Origen* seems to understand both.

5: That the Spirit's helping our infirmities, is

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his

his inciting of us to pray for heavenly things, and not for earthly, as St. Hierom saith; which is to pray ~~not~~ according to the pleasure of God: not as if it were unlawful to pray at all for any temporal blessings; but that we are to be content if we be denied; because those things, viz. deliverance from Afflictions, &c. which we think would profit, may hurt us, as he observes. And therefore all our desires of this kinde, are to be limited by that Petition which our Lord hath taught us: *Thy Will be done*, as Origen notes. In short, by the scope of what they all say, this seems to be their meaning, that the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, by increasing our desires after heavenly things, by making us more indifferent about earthly matters, and content with afflictions, if God seeth them good for us, seeing his Grace is sufficient for us, as he told St. Paul when he so earnestly desired to be delivered from the Messenger of Satan; which is the Instance they all use.

6. By the *unutterable groans*, some of them understand that inexpressible fervency of minde, enkindled in good men by the Spirit of God, wherewith they desire heavenly things; and which where-ever it is, will certainly abate our desires of worldly advantages, and make us less weary of afflictions. Others of them suppose the proper intercessions of the Spirit to be understood by them. And St. Austin, in particular, supposeth that by the *unutterable groans*, is meant, the desire of that state and condition in this world which is best for us: For, saith he, *how should that which is desired be uttered, when it is yet unknown?* i. e. when under an affliction, we pray for what God seeth best for us, not knowing whether that may prove to be the continuance, or removal of it? Thus

Thus you see how they agree in the main about this matter; the interpretation of *Origen* himself, who could not learn it from any of the rest, falling in with theirs; and yet he was apt to finde as many mysteries in the Bible as another man; but he leaves them that could light upon a more sublime sence of these words, to enjoy their opinion by themselves:

Now it is very plain that the supposition upon which they go in interpreting the Text this way, is this, that *our not knowing what to pray for* belongs to the case of present afflictions, which for ought we know may be more profitable for us, than to be exempted, or rescued from them. And now I come to shew that this Supposition, and the Interpretation built upon it, is agreeable to the designe of the Apostle in that part of the Chapter, wherewith this Text hath a plain coherence; which was the second thing propounded.

In the 17 verse *St. Paul* begins to comfort the Christians under their afflictions, shewing them that they *who suffered with Christ*, should be also *glorified together*. This consideration affords two arguments of Patience, which he distinctly notes: The former, being the transcendent greatness of *that Glory* which they hoped for: The latter, the profitableness of their present sufferings to prepare them for that Glory. 1. The nature of the Glory it self: *For I reckon*, saith he, *that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us*, v. 18. From which Verse to the 24th, he proceeds to shew that

*passages, viz. the creature being subject to vanity, and the groaning of the creation; &c. which are made very clear and plain in Dr. Hammond's Annotations, where that which I have here supposed to be the general meaning of the whole Period, is particularly explained; and therefore because I am unwilling to entertain the Reader with the solution of difficulties, somewhat remote from my main designe, I refer him thither.*

Between v.  
19: and v. 24  
there are  
some difficult



as in God's good time the Heathens would be rescued from their Idolatries, to be made partakers of this Glory; so the Christians should be rescued from their sufferings also, under which they now groaned. Wherefore at present he would have them take comfort in the hope of that deliverance and Glory, which was yet to come: *For, saith he, we are saved by hope, &c. v. 24. But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it, v. 25.* 2. He perswadeth them to patience yet further, by the profitableness of their present sufferings: *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to purpose, vers. 28.* that is, who with full purpose and resolution adhere to the profession whereunto they are called, notwithstanding all these sufferings: *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the Image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified, vers. 29, 30. i. e.* And it is not onely true that God will convert these sufferings which now befall us into a means of our inestimable advantage; but we are to consider also, that those whom God fore-knew or fore-approved for his Children, were fore-appointed to sufferings, that in this respect also we might be like our elder Brother *Christ Jesus*, who hath shewn us this way of coming to the joy that is set before us; wherefore we are not to wonder if we be called to actual sufferings now, upon our undergoing of which with faith and patience, God will justify and own us for sincere persons, and reward us eternally. *What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? vers. 31.*

Or.

*Ecce. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake are we killed, &c. vers. 35. Nay, in all these things, which through the divine disposition tend to our good, we are more than Conquerours, vers. 37. &c. This is the second argument used by the Apostle, viz. the profitableness of afflictions themselves, to them that love God; which is fully express'd, vers. 28. and vehemently urged to the end of the Chapter. But the Apostle makes way for this argument by what he saith vers. 26, 27. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what to pray for as we ought, &c. For it is plain by those words likewise, also, that he was now offering to them a further consideration, having just before concluded that motive to patience, from the Deliverance and Glory which they hoped for. And that which he proceeds to shew, is the mistake of thinking that it were at least better for the present to be exempted from these sufferings; since in matters of this nature we know not what to pray for as we ought; but the Spirit it self maketh intercession for us, that we may have what is best; and then if sufferings befall us, we know they are most profitable for us; and consequently that all things work together for good, &c. Now by this time I think it is very plain, that the supposition upon which the Fathers went, restraining the ignorance of what we are to pray for, to the matter of present afflictions, is not onely coherent with the designe of the Apostle in this place, but that the context does indeed require it. I shall onely adde, that the words themselves, *οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμῶν τὰς ἀδυναμιῶν ἡμῶν*, do properly signifie the Spirit relievetb us under our afflictions; for *ἀδυναμία* here translated *infirmity*, is very frequently used*

See Dr.  
Ham. An.

in the New Testament to signify *Misery* and *Distress*.

To conclude therefore, if with *Origen*, *St. Ambrose*, and *Dr. Hammond*, you suppose the intercession of the Spirit to be understood in the proper sense, the Text may be thus paraphrased. "The Gospel of Christ affords us this relief against impatience under afflictions, that whereas we know not whether Afflictions, or Deliverance and Ease be best for us at present, and consequently, as to these respects, know not what to pray for in particular; the Spirit of Christ himself intercedes for us with [*ἀλαλήτοις*] *unuttered* groanings, i. e. earnestly and powerfully: (for by an inexpressible desire we commonly understand one that is vehement.) And God who searcheth our Hearts, and understands that we do sometimes desire such things as tend not to our advantage, knoweth also what the Spirit intercedes for, and [*ὅτι*] that he requests in our behalf, better things for us, than we do for our selves; for we are ever ready to desire [*κατὰ ἀνθρώπου*] such things as seem best to man; but he asks [*κατὰ θεόν*] what God knows to be best for us.

But if with *St. Austin* and the rest, we understand by the *intercession of the Spirit*, his making us to intercede for our selves, as we may without swerving in the least from the main scope of the Text, or excluding the former sense; then the words admit of this Paraphrase. "Whereas when we pray for deliverance from affliction, we know not whether it be best for us to have our desire granted; the Holy Spirit inclines us to an entire submission of our selves to the divine Will; and together with our most earnest prayers of that



" that kinde, there is all along mingled that se-  
 " cret and more vehement desire of what God  
 " seeth best for us; which is a grace of the Holy  
 " Spirit, whereby the forwardness of our Appe-  
 " tites after the ease and comforts of this world  
 " is corrected and governed. Now though this  
 " earnest request be *not uttered*, the particular mat-  
 " ter of it being *not yet known*, since we are igno-  
 " rant what will be most profitable for us, yet *be*  
 " *that searcheth the Heart*, understands it per-  
 " fectly, and *knows* that we vehemently desire not  
 " so much that deliverance, or worldly advantage,  
 " which is the matter of our *uttered groans* and  
 " Prayers, as that good which *the Spirit* moveth  
 " us to pray for, and which we *cannot particularly*  
 " *utter*, that namely which God seeth best for us.  
 " This indeed is a desire of the Heart, which pro-  
 " ceeds from a divine cause; and God is so pleased  
 " with it, that he will not fail to grant it; so that  
 " if afflictions continue, we know *they shall work*  
 " *together for good*, &c. And thus the Holy Spi-  
 " rit relieveth us under our *infirmities* and distres-  
 " ses, by bringing all our worldly appetites under  
 " submission to the pleasure of divine Wisdom  
 " and Goodness.

And thus much for the interpretation of this  
 Text, which I have been the more careful in con-  
 sidering, because it is perpetually produced to ju-  
 stifie the pretences of those men that ascribe their  
 extemporary *inventions and contrivances* in Prayer,  
 to the suggestion of the Spirit of God, and make  
 it little less than Blasphemy for any man to con-  
 tradict them. I have by good Authorities, and  
 by the scope of the place, and by the importance  
 of the words themselves, clearly shewn that it  
 belongs to another very distinct matter, and is

consequently incapable of being made use of for their purpose. And now whether he that useth pious Forms of prayer, be not capable of that *relief* from the Spirit which is here mentioned, I leave it to every sober Reader to judge; but will not so far question his understanding, or presume upon his patience, as to help him any further to do it.

Thus have I at last considered those places of Scripture, which are commonly alledged in favour of those three pretended gifts of the Spirit, which I shewed before were not contained under the general promise of *the Holy Spirit*, Luke 11. 13. Amongst many other reasons inducing me to this work, I shall mention but these two.

1. To vindicate the Holy Spirit from those dishonours that are daily done to him, either while wicked and unrighteous men attribute their confidence that they are personally elected to the *testimony* of the Spirit; or while men impatient of contradiction, ascribe their absurd interpretations of the Scripture to the *Revelation* of the Spirit; or while men *low and weak* in their *rational apprehensions of things*, impute the *vanity* which they frequently utter in their Prayers, to the *impulse* and *suggestion* of the Spirit. 2. To take off the minds of Christians from the expectation of such gifts from the Spirit, as are nowhere promised, that they may more zealously pursue after those Graces which are indeed promised, and without which they cannot be saved. And thus much for that part of my undertaking, which concerned *those Effects for the producing of which the Holy Spirit is promised*.

## C H A P. VI.

*Concerning those to whom the Holy Spirit is promised and given.*

## S E C T. I.

TO speak clearly to this matter, we are in the first place to observe, that the Operations of the Holy Spirit are either,

1. Such as prevent our belief of the Gospel, and our very first desires to know the will of God, and to live according to it; this is that *Grace* which depends not upon our believing, being the cause of those dispositions which I have shewn to be preparatory and antecedently necessary to Faith it self.

2. Such as follow after, to cherish and improve such good beginnings in us, and to endue us with all qualifications necessary to eternal Life. Now the promises of this *Grace* are conditional; such is that promise in St. *Luke* 11. 13. and the condition is plainly exprest, God will give the Holy Spirit to *them that ask him*, who are already convinced of the Truth, and desire to do the Will of God, and pray for divine assistance. Such also is that promise in 2 *Cor.* 6. that God will dwell in us; which depends upon our being the sincere Disciples of Christ, and *cleansing our selves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit*. These are the principal promises of *Grace* made to us in the Gospel,



Gospel; and it is evident we have no *right* to the former, but on condition of our believing in *Christ*, and owning our selves to be his Disciples; nor to the latter, if we do not obey the Gospel. And from hence we may learn where the true difference lies between *common* and *special* Grace, which is a distinction, I doubt, oftner used than understood. That *special* Grace implies an higher degree of favour towards them upon whom it is bestowed, than is signified by *common* Grace, is obvious to every man's understanding. Now there are indeed divers promises of such Grace to be met with in the Gospel, and which will be in force to the end of the world; but they are all of them conditional, and made with respect to some Qualification, without which they do not belong to us. Wherefore *special* Grace is that which is suspended upon the performance of some condition; and consequently, that Grace to which such a condition is not required beforehand, is *common*. But since there are several degrees of Grace, proportionable to the several Qualifications of men: For instance, since more Grace is promised to Believers than to Unbelievers; and yet more to sincere Christians, than to mere Professors: The distinction is to be understood in this Latitude, that the same degree of Grace which is *special* in one respect, may be *common* in another; for that Grace whereof *Faith* is the condition, is common in respect of that which obedience qualifies a Believer to receive; as it is special, with regard to that which does not require the condition of Faith, and which an Unbeliever is capable of. Wherefore the distinction is not accurate enough, to be nice withal: for if it be strictly held to, there are several instances of divine Grace that will not fall under it; because then onely the first Operations of

of the Spirit upon our mindes, *preventing* all good inclinations in them, will be *common* Grace; and those onely which crown our obedience with perseverance, *special*. But admitting the former Latitude, the distinction will reach every Operation of the Holy Spirit upon our mindes; and the difference between that Grace which is common, and that which is special, may be so placed, as that we may understand one another when we use the distinction.

And then I offer it to be considered, whether it be not most agreeable to the Scriptures, to place the difference between them in this; that *common* Grace is that whereby we are led to the faith of *Christ*, and the profession of Christianity, and so includes all those good desires that are excited, and all those good dispositions that are produced in the mindes of men *before* they *believe*; and *special* Grace, that which is given to *Believers* onely, for the strengthening of their Faith, the increasing of their good desires, and the enabling of them to live according to the Gospel. For although there are degrees of that Grace to which Faith is pre-required, and of that which is antecedent to Faith, our Saviour's rule, *To him that hath shall be given*, holding equally in both cases; yet it is observable, that the promise of *the Holy Spirit*, in *St. Luke*, and all the particular promises of that nature in the Gospel, are given onely to *Believers*; and that we have no right to them but upon the performance of some condition required in the New Covenant. Now since there are peculiar promises of *the Holy Spirit*, which belong onely to them that believe, it seems agreeable to the Scriptures, to suppose Faith to be the first condition of special Grace, and consequently that  
Grace



Grace to be common, which requires not the performance of any condition undertaken by us when we are admitted into the Covenant.

It is in this sence that I shall understand the distinction, because otherwise I think it will often prove a Distinction without Difference, since in the strict meaning of the words, the same Grace may be both common and special. Thus also we may understand the difference between *preventing* and *co-operating* Grace, and between *preparing* and *perfecting* Grace: For these distinctions express the same thing in other respects, that is meant by *common* and *special* Grace. For that Grace which we call *common*, because it is given without that condition which is necessary to qualifie us for greater Grace, is also said to be *preventing* Grace, with respect to God, who is the *first* cause of all that is good in us; and likewise *preparing* Grace, with regard to some further improvement, that we are thereby made capable of attaining: And then *co-operating* and *perfecting* Grace, are but other words expressing the same thing that is meant by *special* Grace, with a like difference of respects. So that these *distinctions* are to be understood with the same Latitude, and used with the same caution that the former is. If I am mistaken in this, they are more subtile and intricate than I was aware of.

But the accurate use of these distinctions is not that which I contend for; it is sufficient for me if I can make my meaning to be understood; which is this: That although Faith be an effect of divine Grace, yet there is an higher measure of Grace promised to us if we *believe*, and a greater than that, if we *sincerely obey* the Gospel. The  
greater



greater promises of Grace are made to those that are in a good way already; and the better that way is in which they are, the more plentiful communications of the divine Spirit are they capable of. It is indeed impossible to assigne the several degrees of that Grace, which is bestowed upon men, under such qualifications as the Gospel requires; because we know not the degrees by which men are more or less qualified. The Scripture hath onely acquainted us that believers and good men have promises of special Grace. As for the particular degrees of it, it is not necessary we should know them; and therefore our Saviour hath told us onely in general, *To him that hath shall be given*; that is, as the Parable to which these words belong clearly imports, greater measures of Grace shall be bestowed upon them who best improve the Grace they have already received. And this is a very weighty encouragement to make us all careful to be better.

## SECT. 2.

I come now to speak directly to the Argument of this Chapter, *viz.* who are the *Object* of Grace, or the Operations of the Holy Spirit; and that by laying down two or three plain *Propositions*; which being proved, the Question will be sufficiently and truly answered.

I. *God will give special Grace to all those that perform the conditions upon which it is promised*; which I hope stands in need of no other *medium* to prove it by, than that God is faithful and true, and will perform his promise. Dr. Owen truly observes, *that the same Grace in nature and kinde, is communicated* p. 182.

nicated unto several persons in various degrees, and by them used or improved with more or less care and diligence. I shall adde, that this special Grace (for of that he speaks) is communicated unto them in those degrees, according as the Grace they had formerly received, was improved with more or less diligence; for that is plainly the meaning of those words now mentioned, *To him that hath it shall be given*; a saying so often repeated in the Evangelists, but as neer as I can remember, not once taken notice of by our Author throughout his great Book, though it be as material and necessary a passage, for any Christian Writer, that undertakes this subject, to guide himself by, as any is in all the Scripture. For what reason he slipped over this Text, though it lay so plainly before him in the Bible, he knows best himself: He could not but know it was very pertinent to the subject, though it was impertinent to his manner of handling it: I am sure it is a sufficient confutation of his designe in the *Chapter* concerning *works preparatory to Regeneration*; where, as I shall in due place manifest, he makes all the preparatory works that one can well think of, to signifie nothing at all in effect, towards the obtaining of that Grace whereby we are Regenerated; which, besides that it confutes the Title of the *Chapter*, is nothing less than to make the communication of that Grace an arbitrary act, that depends not upon the performance of any conditions required on our part; and consequently, to destroy all the encouragement we have from the promise of *Christ* to pray for the Holy Spirit, that we may become the sincere Disciples of *Christ*. Indeed he is now and then pleased to mince the matter, as where he tells us; *Sometimes, as to some gifts and graces, God doth bestow his Spirit where there is some preparation*

*paration and co-operation on our part. Sometimes and some Graces, and some Preparation, are uncertain words: But I would know what he means by those Graces, which he supposeth will not be bestowed, though there be never so much preparation on our part; for that is also clearly supposed in his words. For instance, If through the grace of God a man believes the Gospel, and heartily desires to live according to it; praying as our Saviour hath taught him, for the Holy Spirit, in order to that end; I would know whether upon this preparation and co-operation on his part, God will not enable him so to do. If our Author denies it, let him answer our Saviour's saying; *How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* And so upon the like preparation for any special Grace that we need. If he should deny that God will bestow it, I would also desire him to give us his thoughts upon that other saying of our Saviour, which seems to conclude against him in all instances of this nature, viz. *That unto every one which hath it shall be given, Luke 19. 26.**

2. On the other hand, the Gospel giveth us no ground to expect any special Grace, or such Operations of the Spirit as are promised to qualified persons, if we do not perform the conditions upon which the promise depends. But on the contrary, we have reason to believe that God will withdraw that Grace which he hath already given, from those slothful persons that refuse to make any good use of it. Indeed how long God will extend his patience towards them, and bear with their obstinacy, is concealed from us, and depends upon his Sovereign pleasure. But our Saviour plainly told us, that, *from him that hath, i. e. improveth not, even that he*



*he hath shall be taken away from him.* So little reason hath any such person to expect any new accession of Grace to that which he hath forfeited by receiving it altogether in vain. Wherefore I am far from contradicting those men that say the promises of *regenerating Grace* belong not to all who have the Gospel preached to them; though I take my leave of them when they tell us that these promises are restrained to a few men, whom God hath personally chosen, and by an absolute Decree fore-appointed to salvation: but instead thereof I affirm, that the restriction of *these promises* to certain persons, is measured onely by the conditions upon which they are made, *i. e.* that they belong onely to those by whom these conditions are performed. My reason is this; because there is not one promise in the *whole Covenant*, that is made absolutely to this or that man's person; but they are all made with respect to mens qualifications. Now the New Covenant is the onely means by which we can know any thing of God's Councils and Decrees concerning our salvation: Wherefore if the promises of the Covenant be not absolute, but conditional, then the reason why every man cannot claim the benefit of them, is not because *this man's* person was absolutely excluded, and *that man's* benefit absolutely intended by them; but because some are qualified as they ought, to receive the promises, and others are not.

Thus I cannot but subscribe to the *Title* of our Author's third *Chapter* in his fourth *Book*, viz. *That Believers are the onely object of Sanctification, and subject of Gospel-holiness*; for this one would think to be his meaning, that a man must be a Believer before he can be an holy person, since believing

believing of the Gospel is an indispensable condition of obtaining that Grace, by which we may obey it; for I know not what we should understand by *Gospel-holiness*, but the *obedience* of the Gospel. But this is not that which he intends; for if you examine the *Chapter* it self, you will finde that by *Believers* he means *Regenerate persons*: For he tells us, that *that the Spirit is promised and received as a spirit of Sanctification, unto and by the Regenerate, that is, unto Believers, and onely unto them*; and withal, that *the Qualifications of Faith and Obedience are not previously necessary to Regeneration*; which must needs be true, if to be Regenerate be no other thing than to Believe and Obey the Gospel. His meaning is, that *Regeneration, or Faith and Obedience, is previously required to sanctification*, which he confesseth to have some difficulty; and so do I think too, since no man can be regenerate who is not in some measure a sanctified or an holy person. But he removes the difficulty by answering thus; *The same Spirit first worketh Faith and Obedience in us, and then preserveth it when it is wrought*. So that his meaning is this: Faith and Obedience are not conditions pre-required to Faith and Obedience; but where they are preserved, it is necessary they should be before. This you will say is plain enough; but the Doctor is not content to let it go so; wherefore to clear the manner of it, as he saith, we may observe, that *Sanctification may be considered, 1. As to the essential work of it, which consists in the preservation of the principle of spiritual life and holiness communicated to us in our regeneration. 2. As to those renewed actual Operations, whereby it is carried on. And then Faith also may be considered, 1. As to its original communication, infusion, &c. into the Soul, or as to the seed, principle,*

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and habit of it; and thus 'tis wrought as all other grace is in Regeneration. 2. As to its actings in us, or as unto actual believing; or the exercise of Faith, and the fruits of it, in holy obedience. Now, saith he, Sanctification in the first sence respects Faith also in the first; i. e. the preservation of the seed, principle, &c. of Faith, belongs unto the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, and so believers onely are sanctified. And in the latter sence it respects Faith in the latter also; that is, the progress of the work of Sanctification is accompanied with the actings and exercise of Faith, i. e. the actings of Faith are pre-required to a progress in sanctification; and thus Faith is both ways a necessary qualification in and unto them that are sanctified. This is that which our Author calls *Clearing*; but is in my minde confounding what was clear enough before, viz. that where Faith and Holiness are preserved, they must be before; and that the sanctifying work of the Spirit consists in the preservation of them; which is all that he means; onely he has drest it up with formal distinctions, and solemn phrases, as men use to do that would seem to say something, when in effect they say nothing at all. For all this while I do not see that difficulty removed, how that which he makes to be a necessary qualification of being at all sanctified, should not be as necessary to Regeneration; since I cannot understand how a man should be regenerated without some measure of sanctification. But the worst of it is, that the difficulty is impossible to be removed, if Regeneration, and Sanctification, that namely which is the condition of obtaining eternal Life, be the very same thing as I say they are; and for the proof thereof, I refer the Doctor to the Chapter of Regeneration.

Now after all, our Author's designe in distinguishing



guishing thus artificially between Regeneration and Sanctification, was this, that he might seem to grant there were *some Qualifications* required to make us capable of the sanctifying Operations of the Holy Ghost, ( which no man can deny without facing down the Word of God ) though all the while he granted no such thing; excepting onely in this sence, that the Holy Ghost will take care to keep those in a sanctified state, who are sanctified, or ( which is the same thing ) who are regenerated already: For to Regeneration it is very plain that he makes no qualification on our part necessary at all; and that I do not wrong him by saying so, will appear from his own words. He saith, *The chief and principal ends for which the Holy Spirit is promised, may be reduced to four heads; the three first of which are Regeneration, Sanctification, and Consolation: And this, he saith, is the plain order and method of these things.* 1. *He is promised and received as to the work of Regeneration unto the Eleſt:* 2. *As to the work of Sanctification unto the Regenerate:* 3. *As to the work of Consolation unto the Sanctified.* This is the Scheme of those Qualifications which he supposeth are *previously required* to the respective works of the Holy Spirit; and it is plain that he makes no other qualification necessary to the *regenerating work* of the Spirit, but *Election*; which according to him signifies, an absolute Decree of God that some certain persons shall be glorified; and if there be any persons thus absolutely chosen, I confess they need no other *Qualification* for the regenerating work of the Spirit. But now, as the Doctor very well observes, this *Election is no Qualification on our part; but onely the secret purpose on the part of God what himself will do.* From whence I conclude, that if Election be the onely qualification

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previously required to Regeneration, then no *Qualification on our part* is necessary thereunto; and further, that if his Elect onely shall be regenerated, then no *such Qualification* can be profitable to any one else; nor can it make him capable of the *regenerating Grace* of the Holy Ghost. Lastly, if both these things be true, then, besides many other evil consequences fundamentally repugnant to the very nature and designe of the New Covenant between God and Man, it unavoidably follows, that the promises of Grace can never afford us a good reason to do any thing in order to our Regeneration. Which inconvenience of confining *Election to eternal Life* first of all, and then the promises of *regenerating Grace* to a few certain persons without any respect to what they are, one needs not the Doctor's *abilities* to be sensible of, though I finde it requires greater than his own to remove it; unless a man may be said to remove an Objection, by dissembling the force of it, instead of answering it. For the Doctor proposes it thus; *May a person, saith he, who is yet unregenerate, pray for the spirit of Regeneration, to effect that work in him? May he do so! yes, without question he may; and if he please he may let it alone too.* Our Author having told us that the spirit of Regeneration was promised onely to the Elect; and then falling upon that point of praying for the spirit of Regeneration, tells us, that he *might give directions in some enquiries, which indeed deserve a larger discussion, if his present designe would admit of it; but he would instance onely in one, i. e. May a person who is unregenerate, and knows not his election, &c.* But now there is another enquiry that *deserves a larger discussion* than this, *viz.* Whether the Prayers of an unregenerate man can avail any thing towards the obtaining of the Spirit of Regeneration; whether

ther he knows his election, or whether he knows it not. But there was good reason why this enquiry was not to be meddled withal, namely, because our Author's *present designe would not admit of it*, which was to serve an *Hypothesis* that would not bear the enquiry. That he was well enough aware of it, we may see by the last Answer he brings to that *one gentle Question* he took in hand; *May an unregenerate man pray for the spirit of Regeneration?* Doubtless he *may*; for *persons*, saith he, *under such convictions*, as put them upon praying for Regeneration, *have really sometimes the seeds of Regeneration communicated unto them; and then, as they ought, so they will continue in their supplications for the increase and manifestation of it.* Now if the Doctor had not been ashamed of his meaning, he might have express'd it plainly and undisguis'dly in this manner. All may and ought to pray for Regeneration; for some, *i. e.* the Elect, happen to be regenerated while they keep on praying, and then *they* will be sure to pray on still that they may know it. This is the most that can be made of his final Answer; and it comes to no more than this; that the Prayers of unregenerate men *will do them no hurt*: but for any thing I can see, he has not yet satisfied us, that they *will do them any good*; which I should have thanked him to have shewn me according to his principles, if *his present designe would have admitted it.*

But what if the Scriptures teach that the promises of regenerating Grace are made onely to those who are absolutely elected to Glory? I answer, If that can once be shewn, I have done; or if it can be made to appear but probable by the Scriptures, I shall begin to suspect all my reasoning



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against it to be as *carnal*, as the Doctor can believe it. For I heartily believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God; and all my Reasonings shall submit to this one Proposition, *Whatever God hath said, that is true*. Now the Doctor, having repeated the first Proposition of the forementioned Scheme, viz. that the Spirit of Regeneration is promised onely unto the *Eleēt*, tells us, that *the promises concerning the communications of the Spirit unto this end, have been before explained and vindicated*. These words I confess surprized me; for they suppose that he had elsewhere produced some promises in the Scripture, unconditionally made to some certain persons that they should be regenerated; or at least some Texts to prove that the promises of regenerating Grace were meant onely to some men whom God from all eternity had *absolutely chosen to Glory*. Now one would have thought there had been a former Chapter with this Title; *The Eleēt are the onely Object of regenerating Grace*. But there is no such thing: however, I have looked backward and forward to finde where he had *explained and vindicated these promises* he speaks of; but after a long search I was satisfied that my Memory had not failed me in this particular, and that I looked for what was not to be found; unless it be in the first Chapter of the third Book, where he dogmatically tells us, that *the Souls of God's Eleēt were the matter designed of God for the work of the New Creation to be wrought upon*, without offering one syllable of proof to make it good. Now to flip over the great difficulty when one comes at it, by pretending that it is satisfied *elsewhere*, without referring to the particular *place*, is the Artifice either of a bad writer, or one that serves a bad Cause; and a man may fairly put it in practice, that writes so largely

largely as the Doctor does: for 'tis hard if some of his *Readers* are not so *courteous* as to distrust their own *Memories*, after they have gone above half way through so great a Book as his, rather than to question his *honesty*. But for his sake I shall be very sure of an Author, before I trust general References again.

Now till I see those *promises* produced that I have look'd for in vain, *viz.* that God will regenerate *these* Elect, I shall not onely conclude that God will enable us to forsake our sins, and to keep his Commandments, if we believe the Gospel, and implore the assistance of the Holy Spirit; but also, that without these qualifications we have not the least ground to expect that special Grace, which is proper for that end, that is, to make us regenerate or holy persons. If it should be said, that for ought we know there are some persons whom God hath *absolutely decreed* to save, and whom therefore he will take care to regenerate, that they may be fit for salvation; which is the Doctor's notion of *Election*, as is plain from his *Scheme* here in this place, and from the second Chapter of his fifth Book, though he hath disguised it there with many intricate sayings, as his manner is: I answer, without assuming the boldness to pronounce concerning God's *secret Decrees*, that it is a monstrous vanity, for any man that may become a regenerate person, and obtain eternal Life, by a method determined by that Will of God which he *knows*, to trust that he shall be regenerated and saved, by force of a supposed Will in God which he *knows not*. If the Scripture had told us there were *some persons absolutely elected to Glory* hereafter, it had been a very dangerous thing for any man to neglect the care of becoming a

regenerate person, trusting to his *particular election*, for the certainty of his Regeneration; unless withal the Bible had given us the names of *these* special Favourites of Heaven, and he had found his own amongst them. But if the Scripture had mentioned *no such thing* at all; it is little better than madness to venture our Regeneration upon so great an uncertainty. And thus much I think may be gathered from Dr. Owen, where he saith, *The expectation and hope of any man for Life, and Immortality, and Glory, without previous holiness, can be built on no other foundation but this, that God will rescind his eternal Decrees, and change his purposes; that is, cease to be God, merely to comply with them in their sins: And who knows not what will be the end of such a cursed hope and expectation?* These words I confess are capable of a double construction, viz. that the *expectation of Glory*, either without holiness *previous to that expectation*, or without holiness *previous to the obtaining of that Glory*, is a cursed hope. If he means the latter, he supposeth it possible for a Christian to expect Salvation and Glory, though he is neither holy at present, nor presumes that he shall be so hereafter; and this is a *cursed hope* indeed: but I believe it will be hard to meet with it any where, either amongst Christians who deny the Doctrine of *personal Election*, for they are perswaded that holiness is the *condition* of obtaining eternal Life; or amongst Christians that grant it, for they are perswaded, as the Doctor can bear them witness, that God will take care to make the *Elect*, who shall onely be saved, *holy* before he brings them to Glory. There being therefore no great danger of any Christian's entertaining this *cursed hope* that he shall be brought to blessedness, without being made *holy antecedently thereunto*, as our Author's expression



tion is ; one would think his zeal were meant against a wicked man's hoping to be saved, *i. e.* who wants that ground for his hope which the Gospel affords to them who have sincerely forsaken their sinful courses. Now if this be his meaning, it is a very good meaning ; and I think he can hardly say too much to awaken those men who go on in their ungodly practices, and still flatter themselves with the hope of Salvation : But then from his words I infer, 1. Such mens expectation of Glory cannot be built upon this foundation, that God hath absolutely elected some persons to eternal Life ; for the Doctor saith it cannot be built upon any other foundation than this, that God will rescind his eternal Decrees, to comply with them in their sins ; and these are plainly two distinct things. 2. That therefore there are no persons who are thus absolutely elected ; for if there were, then a wicked man might hope that he is one of them ; and to nourish this hope, he need not suppose that God will change his purposes to comply with him in his sins, but that God will take care to convert him from his sins in compliance with his own purposes. And then, 3. It follows plainly, that God hath decreed to save no man but upon condition of his being holy ; and therefore, 4. There is not the least ground for any man to hope that he may be *re-generated*, because he may be elected ; since Holiness, or Regeneration it self, is the condition of any man's being elected to eternal Life. And this is to the full as much as I said concerning the desperateness of putting our Regeneration upon the venture of our Election : And whether it be not the consequence of the Doctor's words according to the most-charitable construction of them, I leave the Reader to judge between us.

But

But that he may not complain that I mis-represent his opinion concerning that which he calls the *Decree of Election*, I shall here give you his own account of it, from the second Chapter of his fifth Book, where he discloseth his judgement of it very solemnly. His designe in that Chapter is to prove that *eternal Election is a cause of and motive unto holiness*, as the Title thereof acquaints us; and therefore I acknowledge he took a very proper way to begin with explaining what he understands by *eternal Election*: But I can by no means think he hath done fairly, to make *Election* to be one thing when he industriously explains his notion of it, and another thing when he proceeds to use it for the proving of something else. To make it plain to him that he is guilty of this fault, I will first shew what he understands by the Decree of Election, where he pretends to prove that it is a motive to Holiness. To this end he saith, *First, the Sovereign Grace and Love of God herein, is a powerful motive thereunto.* Now the Grace which he means is this, *That God should first chuse us unto Life and Salvation by Jesus Christ, decreeing immutably to save us out of the perishing multitude of Mankind, from whom we neither then did in his eye or consideration, nor by any thing in our selves ever would differ in the least*; which is as much as to say, that *Election* is a peremptory Decree of God, that *this* and *that* man shall be saved, *without considering* them under any qualification, which the Gospel saith is necessary to eternal Life: so that his judgement in this place is, that God hath absolutely elected all that shall be saved; which he plainly affirmed not long before, by saying, that *every thing else will fail, but what is an especial fruit and effect of this Decree of Election.* But that he might be sure to be understood, he propounds the common Objection against this Doctrine, viz. that on supposition

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position thereof, a *chosen one* may happen to argue in this manner: *If God hath thus chosen me, I may then live in sin as I please; all will be well and safe in the latter end, which is all I need care for, i. e.* Election to eternal Life being supposed to be absolute, it follows that a man may live in sin all his days, and it shall not go the worse with him hereafter. Which inference seems to be plain and strong, and I think our Author confesseth it so to be, by not once attempting to shew the contrary. But instead thereof he tells us, *This is the language of a Devil, and not of a man; and he that shall act practically according to this inference, is such a Monster of Impiety and presumptuous Ingratitude, as Hell it self cannot parallel in many instances.* May be so; but I hope a man may doctrinally make this inference without being as ill-natured as the Devil; and that our Author will not call us *Devils*, for urging him with an Objection that he is not able to answer. For when all is done, if Believers should argue in this sort, and live accordingly, he has no way, that I can see, to convince them that they shall fare the worse for it. But thus he goes on; *I shall use some boldness in this matter; and to do him right, he is every jot as good as his word: for presently he sets himself to call them stupid, impious, and ungrateful Monsters; and to bestow such language upon them, as might make him liable to be questioned by his Brethren, whether he has not taken too much boldness with the Elect; if he had not made his peace with them in particular, by saying that he never knew any man who was duely perswaded of his election, in whom it tended to ingenerate looseness of Life.* But I suppose he is not acquainted with them *all*; and if there be any of them that make this *hellish* inference doctrinally and practically too, any man may

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may see, that his foul words do not confute the consequence of their arguing, although they may deserve them for living according to it: For if they should chance not to care for the Doctor's *boldness* in calling them out of their names, he has no more to say to them; and their conclusion, *All will be well and safe in the latter end, which is all we need care for*, is in as good a condition as it was before he meddled with it. For it is the inconsequence of their arguing that must be shewn, to free the Doctor's opinion concerning personal Election, from the charge of being a temptation to carnal Security. And this he was the more obliged to shew, because he said two Pages before, that *under this pretence chiefly, his Doctrine concerning Election is blasphemed, and evil spoken of*. It would therefore have been very kindly done, both to himself and us, to shew the fore-mentioned arguing to be inconsequent; but I challenge him to shew me one single Line that looks that way through all his pretended answer to the Objection, which is yet above two Pages long; and so may serve for one instance among many, what an excellent faculty our Author has, when pertinent matter is scanty with him, to confound a Reader with a multitude of words.

There are many other ways by which he pretends to shew that *eternal Election is a motive to holiness*; but this is sufficient to let you see what he understands by eternal election, where he endeavours to prove it to be such a motive, *viz.* that it is God's absolute purpose from Eternity, to save some persons, not considered under any good qualification. I shall now shew you his definition of it towards the beginning of the Chapter: *It is, saith he, the eternal and immutable purpose,*

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pose of God, that all who are his, in a peculiar manner, all whom he designs to bring unto blessedness in the everlasting enjoyment of himself, shall antecedently thereunto be made holy. These words are printed in the *Italick* Character, that the Reader might observe them the better, and take notice that they are the foundation of the following discourse. And I desire also the Reader to observe, that this is our Author's definition of that *Election*, which, as he pretends, is afterwards proved to be a motive to holiness. Now this notion of Election is plainly different from that; for he saith, it is the eternal purpose of God, that all who are his in a peculiar manner, &c. His in a peculiar manner! how came they to be so? were they his in a peculiar manner before they were elected, or not? If the former, then they were God's peculiar people before they were chosen to be so, and there was no need of his election to make them so. If the latter, then I understand what he means by saying, that *Election is the eternal purpose of God, that all who are his shall be holy*, viz. that *Election* is the purpose of God that all who are elected already, shall be made holy; which is as much as to say, that Election is Election; and they that are elected to be holy, are elected to be holy. To save himself from this Nonsense, he has but one way, and that is by saying that these all whom he speaks of, were God's people in a peculiar manner, by virtue of another Decree of Election than that which is here described, viz. of that absolute Decree to save them; which he afterwards shews to be a motive unto holiness. And then this is the meaning of his words: Eternal Election is God's Decree that all they shall be made holy, concerning whom he had already decreed that they shall certainly be saved. Now this is that which I said, that he means

means one thing by eternal Election, when he defines it to lay a foundation for his following discourse; and another thing by it when he enters upon the discourse it self. And there was good reason for it: for if he had defined eternal Election to be God's absolute purpose to save so many certain persons, without regarding how they are qualified, before that his purpose; he had found himself obliged to prove this bold Assertion of his, before he proceeded to build his other opinions upon it. But here he declines that work, by substituting another Proposition in the room of it; which indeed sounds as if it were the same, but really is very different from it, as he had declined it before, by pretending that he had done it elsewhere. Now if I understand any thing of the duty of an Author, he was more than ordinarily concerned to produce some evident proofs out of Scripture, if there be any there, that the decree of Election to eternal Life is made with respect to the persons of men, and not their Qualifications; for this is not onely supposed by him in this Chapter, but 'tis the *Hypothesis* upon which the greatest part of his Book runs; and which is more than all the rest, he laies such a stress upon it, as I do not remember to have met with any man that does the like: For in this Chapter he saith, *Men may frame an Holiness to themselves, and be stirred up unto it by motives of their own; (as there is a Religion in the world, that runs in a parallel Line by that of Evangelical truth; but toucheth it not, nor will do so to eternity) but that which the Gospel requires, is promoted on the grounds and by the motives that are peculiar to it, whereof this of God's free electing Love and Grace is among the principal; which, setting aside the fantasticalness of his expression, is plainly to send all men to Hell that question his*

Doctrine



Doctrine of Personal Election, let them be otherwise never so careful to do the Will of God. Now instead of proving this necessary Article of his Faith, he manfully runs away from it, where any one would have expected to see him fall to work about it : and then takes occasion from his definition of Election, to prove that all who are *ordained to Glory*, are *ordained* to holiness, in order to Glory ; which is a Proposition much better able to shift for it self, than *that there are any persons whom God hath absolutely elected to Glory* ; which is the notion he proceeds upon, after he had finish'd his proof of the other. This is so bleak a business, that although a man wanted common honesty, and his Conscience would suffer him to impose upon others ; yet if he had but ordinary Wit, he would hardly venture to expose himself in this manner, unless he were furnished with such a vast measure of Confidence as to think himself able to *braze* out any thing.

And now I must tell the Doctor, that all this was but a juggling Plot of his own, and not one of his usual mischances : for not long after he had defined eternal Election, as you have seen, he takes the boldness to suppose God's Decrees to run in this manner : *I do, saith God, choose these poor lost sinners to be mine in an especial manner, to save them by my Son ; and in order hereunto, I decree that they shall be holy.* Now it is not at all probable that he should so soon forget that he had solemnly made eternal Election to consist onely in God's purpose to regenerate *all that were his in a peculiar manner, &c. i. e.* ( now that his designe begins to be opened ) *all those that were absolutely elected to Glory.* Onely it was not fit to put these plain words into the definition ; for then every ordinary

dinary Reader would have discovered there was another Decree of Election, antecedent to that which the Doctor had defined; and perhaps might be so uncivil as to expect a proof of the supposition: But instead of these plain words, it was more prudently done to put in *those who are his in an especial manner*, which are somewhat obscure words; and *those whom he designs to bring to blessedness*, which expresses but half his meaning: For he supposes the *design* he speaks of to be *absolute*. This care being taken, that which he takes upon him to *confirm briefly*, as he saith, is this, *viz. That if we are not personally holy, we have no interest in that Decree of God whereby any persons are designed unto Glory*; which is a great truth, but, by the way, most false, according to his principles: for while a person who is absolutely elected remains unholy, as he doth, till he is regenerated, he hath as full an interest in the purpose of God to bring him to Glory, as he can have after he is regenerated; since nothing can be more plain, than that he who is elected upon no consideration of holiness, cannot have the less interest in *that Election* for not being holy. But this I see, that our Author's unhappy way of expressing himself, sometimes makes him hit upon a better saying than he intended. That which he meant to say, as is plain from his definition, is this, that all who are elected to Glory shall be made holy; which while he is proving, he does very carefully drop in a word now and then, as if he were proving absolute election to eternal Life; and this for a very good reason, *viz. that he might by convenient degrees slip into that notion of Election*, against his turn came to prove it to be a motive unto holiness. But such unintelligible work he has made by mingling these things together, in his third

*Self.* where his designe is to prove that the Elect shall be made holy, that any one may see how his thoughts were paddled while he was contriving to come off in this business: and he comes off very fairly; for thus he winds up that Section, *The Councils of God therefore concerning us, i. e. his electing us to eternal Life, do not depend upon our Holiness;* which is as much as to say, that the Decree of Election to eternal Life is not conditional, but absolute: *but upon our holiness our future happiness depends in the Councils of God;* which is saying quite backward, that the Decree of Election is not absolute, but conditional. For to say that *our future happiness depends upon our holiness in the Councils of God,* is in plain English to say, that it is one of the Councils concerning us, that our happiness should depend on our holiness; which cannot truly be said, if it depends upon an absolute Decree: Therefore the Decree of Election to eternal Life is conditional; for if it were absolute, then, according to that Decree, a man may be saved without any holiness at all, which the Doctor denies; and thus he comes off with contradicting himself within the compass of three Lines, as you cannot but see, unless you are so taken with the *chiming* of his words, that you are not at leisure to examine the *sence*.

From all this it may I think be presumed, without any uncharitableness, that the Doctor did not write with an intention to *satisfie* his Reader; and what other end he proposed to himself, I leave it to his own Conscience. For his *evasions*, when he is to prove the chief matter in question; and his *obscurities*, when it is inconvenient to speak plainly, cannot without an incredible reproach to his Parts and Abilities, be looked on otherwise



than as studied Artifices to serve his Cause withal. Especially, if you consider how seasonably he contradicts himself, when his designe requires it; and of this I will give him one instance more out of his present discourse, and then leave his Friends to judge of his honesty as they please. In answer to that Objection against his Opinion, that indeed it rendered holiness unnecessary, among other things he thought good to say, *That as for a mans own personal election, he cannot believe it, nor is obliged to believe it, any otherwise, but as God reveals it by its effects; i. e. in plain terms, no man can or ought to believe that he is one of the Elect, till he believes and obeys the Gospel; for that he means by the effects of Election.* Now supposing this did something to satisfy the former Objection; yet the Doctor saw well enough that it would raise another, viz. that if this be true, then no man's personal Election can be a motive to him to become an holy person; because he cannot believe it till he is so already. The Doctor does not indeed propound this Objection; but he forestals it, (as you will see presently what reason he had so to do) by a down-right contradiction to what he had immediately said before; for he goes on thus: *No man ought, no man can justly question his own Election, DOUBT of it, or disbelieve it, until he be in such a condition, as wherein it is impossible that the effects of Election should ever be wrought in him, if such a condition there be in this world.* Now this is very strange; cannot a man believe his Election till he sees it in the effects, and yet cannot he justly doubt of it before those effects are wrought in him? Is he not obliged to believe it till then; and is it yet true that he ought not to disbelieve it, till 'tis impossible those effects should be wrought; and yet perhaps there is

is no such condition in this world? I hope our Author will not say, that this is one of those *Mysteries* which we cannot *understand* without his *New Light*; but rather *confess* against himself, what he has taken upon him to accuse S. P. of, P: 205.  
*viz. that these are the words of one who seems not much to Consider what he says, so as that it may serve his present turn*: For he does not use to contradict himself for nothing; and the reason is plain why it was necessary here. In the next Page he was to shew that personal Election was a motive to Holiness in point of Gratitude: Now that the Motive might be fit to be used upon every body, it was necessary to say, that no body had cause to doubt of his Election; which part of the Contradiction look'd forward to encounter a second Objection, as the other part of it look'd backward to keep off the first. And at this rate a Childe may confute all the Arguments in the world, that are brought, for, or against any thing.

Having thus discovered our Author's fallacious way of proceeding upon this Head, and his art in declining the proof of what he so boldly affirms concerning *personal Election*, and the promise of regenerating Grace being made to his Elect; it may not now be unnecessary to put the Reader in minde, that I have not been wandring all this while from the designe of this Section; which was, to shew that we have no reason to expect God's special Grace, (such as that is whereby we are enabled to keep the Commandments of *Christ*) if we be not on our parts qualified to receive it. Now I do not see how this can be admitted for a certain truth, on supposition that there are any absolute promises in the Scripture made to some particular

men that God will regenerate them; or that there are any certain persons whom, without consideration of any qualities in them, God decreed to save. But if these are groundless suppositions themselves, I understand not which way any man should think to obtain the special Grace of God, but by performing the condition on which it is promised. And then I say with Dr. Owen, that *Believers are the onely object of Sanctification, and subject of Gospel-holiness*; not meaning by Believers as he doth, *holy persons*, though the word is, and may be so used; but those merely, that are persuaded that *Jesus is the Christ*. I onely adde, that these Believers must visibly own themselves the Disciples of *Christ*, and they must use earnest Prayers for that divine Grace which will enable them to do the Will of God upon Earth as it is done in Heaven. For both these conditions are supposed in that promise of the Holy Spirit, made to the Disciples of *Christ*, which is mentioned in *Luke 11. 13*. Wherefore if Believers themselves do not perform these conditions, they have no reason to expect that special Grace which is there promised. Finally, since the Spirit of God is promised to dwell in good men onely; if the Disciples of *Christ* do not improve *that Grace* which they obtain by their Prayers, to actual amendment, and a sincere obedience of the Gospel, it would be a vain presumption in them to think that God will communicate those fuller measures of Grace to them, while they are thus unreformed, which are signified by his *dwelling in us*.



## SECT. 3.

Having thus shewn you who are the Objects of *special Grace*, I proceed to a third conclusion, which being proved, nothing else seems necessary for the satisfying of this Question, *To whom the Holy Spirit is given.* Wherefore I adde,

3. That *common Grace*, or that which is not suspended upon the performance of any condition required in the Covenant, is given to all those that live under the ministration of the Gospel. My meaning is, they are all prevented with that Grace which makes it possible for them to begin well, *i. e.* to desire the knowledge of God's ways with a purpose of walking in them when they are known; and then, to be convinced that the Gospel is the Word of God, by the use of those external means which God hath afforded them. I do not say, that every one of them hath this Grace *always* bestowed upon him; for it is possible that some of those to whom the *Word of God* is spoken, may put it away from themselves, as the *Jews* did, and be at length forsaken by the divine Grace, and left under an obstinate and unteachable minde, as they were. Much less shall I venture to say how long the divine Spirit moves upon the Souls of men, to make them teachable and willing to learn the truth before he gives them over: For God hath reserved this matter to his own Sovereign pleasure; and therefore we neither ought to set limits to his patience, nor to presume upon the length of it. But all I say is this; That Grace of God, which prevents our first good inclinations and desires, and is necessary to make us capable

of learning the Truth, is given to as many as have the Gospel preached to them; so that until by their obstinacy they have utterly forfeited the divine Grace and Blessing, it is in their power to lay aside prejudice, to attend to the Word of God, and receive the knowledge of the truth.

Out of many Arguments which the Scripture affords to this purpose, I shall chuse but one, having already drawn out this Part into a greater length than I expected; but that concluding strongly enough to spare me the labour of producing any more. The Argument I mean is founded upon those passages in the New Testament, wherein those to whom the Word of God is made known, are threatned with eternal Damnation, if they believe it not, and with more grievous punishments than had been inflicted on them if the Gospel had never been preached to them. Thus saith our Saviour to his Apostles: *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned,* Mark 16. 15, 16. *If any man hear my words, and believe not, but rejecteth me, the word that I have spoken the same shall judge him in the last day,* John 12. 47, 48. *He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God,* John 3. 18. Further, the severity of that punishment which belongs to them who believe not, is intimated plainly in the aggravation of their fault, as our Saviour saith, *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin, they could not have been accused of this particular sin, of not believing in me, and that would have mitigated their other faults; but now they have no cloak for their sin, they are every way inexcusable, and there-*  
fore

fore the more punishable, *John* 15. 22. But it is fully express'd in *Matth.* 11. 20. where we finde our Saviour upbraiding the Cities that rejected him, and declaring it should be more tolerable for Tyre, and Sidon, and Sodom, at the day of judgement than for them, *vers.* 22, 23. These testimonies of Scripture being premised, I argue thus: *If all that preventing Grace, which is necessary to believing, be not sometime given to all that hear the Gospel, then it would be always impossible for some that hear to believe; and that without their fault. But it is not always thus impossible for any; therefore such Grace is sometime given to all. The former Proposition is evident: for as long as I want that which is necessary to the doing of any thing, so long is that thing impossible to me; and if it be not my fault that I want the former, neither is the impossibility imputable to me as a fault. Finally, it is not my fault that I want it, if I could never do any thing to procure it; and 'tis plain that no body can do any thing to procure that Grace, which is at first necessary to put him into the way of well-doing. The latter Proposition is clear, thus: No man shall be condemned to eternal punishment, much less to such punishment in a more intolerable degree, for not believing what was always impossible for him to believe, and that without his own fault: But every man to whom the Gospel is preached, shall be condemned to eternal punishment if he believes it not, and to a sorer punishment for not believing it; therefore it is not always thus impossible for any man, to whom the Gospel is preached, to believe. The second Proposition is clear from the fore-mentioned passages of Scripture; as the first is from the unchangeable perfections of the Divine Nature. For to say that God requires impossible things of any man, and so takes ad-*



vantage against him, to cast him into fiercer flames, where he must burn for ever, is to blaspheme all the Attributes of God, but those which make him great and powerful; it is to rob him of all his Goodness, in the glory of which he hath expressed so much delight. For not to say that this fastens the reproach of Insincerity, and soul Dissimulation upon the Redeemer of Mankind, it is to charge the Creator of Men and Angels with Tyranny, and the Judge of the whole world with Injustice. God is pleased to expostulate with men, because of their disobedience, from that relation wherein they stand to him as his Children and Servants; *If I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord, Mal. 1. 6.* Now can we think that he has given any man cause to retort that Expostulation in this manner: *If thou art a Father, where are thy Bowels? If thou art a Master, where is thy Justice?* for kindness belongs as necessarily to the Character of a good Father, and justice to that of a good Master, as Obedience and Fear can to that of a good Child or Servant. And we are not to forget, that God hath appealed to the common principles of Reason imprest upon the mindes of men, in justification of the equity and mercy of his proceedings towards them; the latter in *Isa. 1. 18.* *Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord, &c.* The former in *Ezekel 18. 25.* *Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal?* But to inflict a more grievous punishment, and that eternal, for not performing an impossible condition, is in its own nature cruel and unjust; and therefore cannot stand with the goodness of a Father, nor with the justice of a Master, nor with God's pleading with obstinate evil men from these relations, and the appeal he makes to their own mindes, for the righte-

ousness

justice of his dealings with them; which upon these terms it is impossible for them to acknowledge, unless they lay aside the brightest principles of their Reason.

If some things be so evil that they can never be good, then some things there are which can never be ascribed to God without Blasphemy. Now if the inflicting of eternal Torments upon men for what they could never help, be not one of those things, I desire any man to tell me what is. Besides, is it Blasphemy to say that God can lie? But he hath told us, *that he taketh no pleasure in the death of him that dieth*; but had rather he should turn and live: And what shadow of truth can there be in that saying, if he first prescribes impossible terms of forgiveness, and then damns the sinner with more severity for not performing them? I shall have occasion to debate this matter with Dr. Owen in another place; but in the mean time, let him please to contrive some undeniable instance of barbarous injustice, which without question he can easily do; and when he has given us his *Idea* of it, I will undertake to reconcile the fastening it upon God, with the honour of his Attributes, as easily as he can secure the glory of the divine Goodness, while he makes God to oblige men to impossibilities under pain of eternal Damnation. But if there be no difference between *right* and *wrong*, if we know nothing so good or so evil, but it may cease to be so; then the divine Perfections may cease too, and for ought we know the Nature of God is mutable; and so farewell to the Notion of God himself, and the certainty of any thing in Religion. And if this be not the last result of that Doctrine, which makes believing, and consequently obeying the

the Gospel, impossible from the very first, to them that will be damned for not doing so; I leave different men to consider.

The Conclusion is, that believing is possible to all that hear: Now the *possibility* thereof must consist either in this, that of *our selves* we are able to dispose our mindes to that *love of the Truth*, to that *teachableness* and *attention*, which will cause actual believing as soon as the Gospel is plainly and evidently made known; or else in this, that by the help of *divine Grace* we may be thus disposed, and consequently come to the knowledge of *Christ*. The former is the *Semipelagian Doctrine*, which I have shewn to be contrary to the Scripture [*Chap. 4. Sect. 1.*] therefore the latter remains to be true, *viz.* that through the Operations of the Holy Spirit, it is possible for all that hear the Gospel to *believe*; and by force of the former Argument it follows, that common Grace, or that which makes it possible for a man to begin well, and by believing, to perform the first condition of the Gospel, is given to *all* that hear it.

I do not indeed finde any *such express* promise in the Gospel, that God will give every man that hears the Gospel Grace to believe it; as there is that he will give the Holy Spirit to Believers and good men: And this may be said why there is no such promise made expressly, *viz.* because it would have been of little or no use; either to those that *believe already*, because they need not that Grace which is proper to beget Faith at first, but onely that which is proper to confirm and increase it; or to those who do *not believe*; for of whatsoever use such a promise could be to any



any man, it must suppose the belief of it, which he would want who does not yet believe the Gospel to be a divine Revelation. But though there be no promise of common Grace expressly made to *all* that hear the Gospel, yet there is an *implicite* promise thereof contained, partly, under that obligation which the Gospel lays upon all that hear it, to believe; and partly under those passages in Scripture which suppose Faith to be an effect of the Holy Spirit's Operations in us: For no man can be justly obliged to impossible terms of forgiveness, under pain of a more grievous punishment; therefore if Faith be an effect of the Holy Spirit, God will give his Spirit in *such* measure to all that shall hear, that it will be possible for them to believe. Which is so clear a consequence, that the very mention of it would have been sufficient, had not some men gotten a custom of imputing the want of Faith (and indeed of all other Christian virtues) to a defect on God's part, as if he had not given them Grace enough to *believe*, and repent, &c. The meaning of which Phrase, and the like, if it be this, that the Grace of God hath not put it into their power to *believe*, is so highly dishonourable to the divine Goodness, that I have thought fit to shew wherein it is so, and thereby to prove the untruth of it.

Finally, this *implicite promise* of *that* Grace which is necessary to put them that hear the Gospel into the way of obtaining Salvation by it, is not properly a part of the New Covenant; (such as the promises made to Believers and good men are) because *there is no condition annexed to it*. Thus that promise of God, that he would send his Son into the world to be the Mediator between God and Man, could be no part of that Covenant,

nant, whereof *Christ* is the Mediator, and which he was to seal with his Blood : But it was an absolute promise of an act of Grace, that was antecedent to the Covenant it self, and which depended not upon any condition required by it. The promise of a Saviour was indeed part of the Gospel, or of the revelation of God's Will to Mankind in order to our recovery and salvation; but it cannot be affirmed to be a part of the Covenant between God and Man with any more propriety, than it can be said that God's entering into Covenant with Man is an Article of the Covenant. In like manner, that Grace by which we are first put into a capacity of believing, and consequently of obeying the Gospel after it is revealed, is *supposed* in the Gospel, otherwise the conditions of the Covenant were impossible; which is to take away the very foundation of a Covenant of Grace, such as that is whereof our Lord *Jesus* is the Mediator. But although the promise of this Grace is implied in the Gospel; yet 'tis not properly any part of the Covenant, because 'tis a promise without condition.

#### SECT. 4.

4. From what hath been already proved, it may be inferred; *That the promises of special Grace are made to us all under possible conditions.* For since a Believer may by his prayers obtain that special Grace of God, which is needful for sincere obedience; since an obedient Christian may obtain that further Grace which is needful for perseverance; seeing also that Grace which is necessary to a good beginning, *i. e.* to excite good desires in us, and to bring us to Faith, is given absolutely

to

to *all* that live under the means of Grace : It follows plainly, that the promises of special Grace are made to *all such* under possible conditions.

Wherefore we may conclude, that God will give his Holy Spirit to all that live under the ministration of the Gospel; that they may learn and believe, and pray for his further Grace; that to all who are thus qualified he will give his Spirit, that they may overcome the World, and obey the Gospel: And that to all such sincere Christians he will give his Spirit, that they may perfect holiness in the fear of God, and persevere to the end: which is a plain and satisfactory Answer, to the second Question.

## CHAP.



## CHAP. VII.

*Concerning the Manner and Measure of  
the Holy Spirit's Operations.*

## SECT. I.

**T**HIS Question may easily be multiplied into a great many more, according as men are led by their curiosity. That which has been still most debated under this Head, is this: How far, or in what measure, the Operations of the Holy Spirit upon our mindes, conduce to those effects which are designed to be produced by them.

Now concerning this, and all other *Questions* of this kinde, I observe, that the Scriptures are very silent, in comparison to that clear and full account which they have given us of the former; God having thought it sufficient for our encouragement in the search of Truth, and the study of Godliness and Virtue, to let us know assuredly that he will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him, for necessary and profitable purposes, without satisfying our curiosity about the *manner* of his Operations, and the *measure* of their power. Wherefore in treating upon this Subject, a man should not venture to *affirm* many things, or to conclude very particularly, much less to obtrude his Opinions upon other men: For in matters that are not knowable but onely by Revelation, and concerning which there is but little revealed; he that is most ready to *affirm* boldly and particularly, is still

still most likely to miscarry; and that, if there were no other reason for it, because it argues an *immodest* temper, to define peremptorily in things which God hath *reserved* from our knowledge: and this, to be sure, is none of those Qualifications which he hath promised to reward with the discovery of truth.

But yet I observe that some men have been as dogmatical and particular in determining the *manner* and *measure* of the Holy Spirit's Operations, as if their Conclusions were as clearly grounded upon Revelation, as the plainest truth in the Gospel; and have thrust them upon the world with more *fierceness* and *zeal* than would have become a much better Cause. For an instance hereof, we may take Dr. Owen's Book, where he does not only assert for himself and his Brethren, that *the efficiency* (as he calls it) of the Holy Spirit on the *minde*s of men is *irresistible*, and that Grace is *al-*  
*ways prevalent or effectual, and cannot be resisted, as*  
*to that end wherunto of God it is designed,* and much more to the same purpose; but falls upon his Adversaries, in this point, with such insolent language and immodest reproaches, that they could hardly deserve to be worse used by him, if they had affirmed divine Grace was not necessary to Regeneration, as resolutely as they maintain the contrary. This is the Doctrine which he pretends to stand up for against the New Pelagians, and a crew of Socinianized Arminians, (they are his own words) as if to deny the personality of the Holy Ghost, and the assistances of divine Grace, and to contradict his opinion that the Holy Spirit does *irresistibly* produce the effects of Grace upon the *minde*s of men, were the same thing. But this you will less wonder at, when you consider

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sider, that he makes nothing to compare those that oppose his opinion to *Cain* and *Ishmael*: For *faith*, *The Enmity of Cain against Abel* was but a branch of this proud inclination. The instance of *Ishmael* in the Scripture, is a representative of all such as under an outward profession of the true Religion, do scoff at those who being as *Isaac*, Children of the Promise, do profess and evidence an interest in the internal power of it, which they are unacquainted withal. And by this he shews that the practice of despising his opinions concerning Grace, has not been taken up of late. Now I will not say how old the practice has been of making every quarrel a man is concerned in, equal to the Cause of those good men whose sufferings are mentioned in the Scripture; but 'tis well enough known, that 'tis at least as old as that Faction which our Author hath espoused; and whether this be not one branch of a proud inclination, let sober men judge. It has been often observed of these men, how dear *They*, and *their Opinions*, are to themselves; and the Doctor has here given you a good ordinary instance of it: For if he had not been bewitch'd with self-conceit, he had never made this absurd parallel: for what had *Abel* or *Isaac* to do with his Cause? If he had onely called us the seed of *Cain* and *Ishmael*, without saying why, who would have thought the reason had been our questioning whether men are snatch'd into a state of Grace by an irresistible power? And yet this is his great quarrel against us concerning the manner of Conversion, which here he pretends to explain. I know he does more than insinuate, and that more than once, that we disown the very assistances of the Holy Spirit, as I shall convince you in a fitter place; but this you are to look upon as an effect of his rage, which makes him foam out

Calum-



Calumnies against us without any discretion ; for he knows well enough that his Adversaries are not guilty of it, as I shall shew you too from his own words ; and then I shall desire him to consider whether the *Father of Lyes* be not the *Representative* of such shameless Writers as he is an example of. As to what he saith, that *such a* P. 287.  
*work of God* upon men, as he contends for, is exposed to *derision*, if upon that account he compares his Adversaries to *scoffing* Ishmael, I think he does them great wrong : For let him, if he can, name any of his opinion in this matter, who has debated the point with any appearance of Modesty and Sobriety ; and was answered with the least shew of Contempt. But as for those ( of whom Dr. Owen is one ) that instead of answering the Arguments of their Adversaries, complain that they are laughed at, and do themselves fall upon them with the foulest reproaches, as upon the Enemies of *Christ* ; it may be sometimes good to take down their haughty spirits, and to render their arrogance contemptible, lest others be encouraged to hope, that any Cause may be carried by vapouring.

In my opinion it is a difficult undertaking, to define in *particular* what is the manner and measure of the Holy Spirit's Operations ; because, I think, the Scriptures have not particularly acquainted us what it is. Let others who have better considered the thing, enjoy the liberty of thinking otherwise ; and for my own part, I shall with all thankfulness submit to further instruction. But as for Dr. Owen, I hope to make it appear, that the Scriptures do not favour his determination of the Question ; which I shall the rather endeavour, because I conceive this opinion, that *the Spirit*

worketh upon our mindes in an irresistable manner, especially as he hath advanced it, to be of dangerous consequence to the Souls of men. In the mean time I shall lay down some Propositions, the truth of which will, I think, be easily granted by all sober Christians, from whence we may in general conclude what is the manner of the Holy Spirit's Operations, and the measure of their power; not that I think even this were needful to our Author, and those of his way, had not fallen into a dangerous Mistake by venturing so far. For that which has been already said seems to me to afford a sufficient foundation of Godliness and Comfort, if all be not subverted again by their opinion of the Manner wherein we are regenerated by the Holy Spirit. Now I think it will appear that those general Propositions wherein they agree with us concerning the Manner of the Holy Spirit's Operations on our mindes, are inconsistent with their particular definition of it. And the first of these is this: That,

I. *Faith and Repentance, or Conversion to God, together with Perseverance in Holiness, are truly and properly the effects of God's Word, revealed to us in the Doctrines of the Gospel.* Wherefore such is the manner of the Holy Spirit's Operation in producing these Qualifications in our mindes, that it hinders them not from being the *Genuine effects* of the Revelation of the Gospel; but they ought still to be ascribed to *that* force and efficacy of those divine Truths which are contained in it, whereby the Gospel is in it self a fit and proper means of working the Grace of God in the mindes of men. Now it is very plain that the proper and natural power of the Gospel to produce these effects, consists in the evidence of its Truth, in the

the authority and efficacy of its Laws, and in the weightiness of its Promises and Threatnings, and other motives to obedience. Wherefore if *Conversion be the proper effect of God's Word*, it follows that the Holy Spirit does, 1. *Onely co-operate to the producing of that effect*; and, 2. *In that manner*, as it may truly be affirmed to be the effect of those *considerations* which are propounded to us in the Gospel.

The truth of the Supposition is manifest from divers places of Scripture: As for *Faith*, St. Paul plainly tells us, *it comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God*, Rom. 10. 17. Thus upon the conversion of many Unbelievers, it is said, that *the Word of God grew mightily and prevailed*, Acts 19. 20. i. e. the testimonies which God gave to the truth of the Gospel, convinced many that were in all appearance most likely to oppose it. Hence St. Paul tells the *Corinthians*, that *in Christ Jesus he had begotten them through the Gospel*; i. e. by the preaching of the Gospel he had first brought them over to the faith of *Christ*. Furthermore, our *obedience* is by St. Peter ascribed to the power of God's Word, where he saith, that we have *great and precious promises given to us, that by These we might be partakers of the divine Nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. To the same purpose the *Word of God* is said to *work effectually in those that believed*, 1 Thess. 2. 13. i. e. by the force of those promises mentioned by St. Peter, and other weighty considerations moving to holiness. Finally, our *Regeneration* is expressly ascribed to the Word of God; for we are said to *be born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever*, 1 Pet. 1. 23.



and our Spiritual improvement is attributed not long after to the same cause; *As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby,* 1 Pet. 2. 2. Thus the increase of Christian Virtue, is ascribed both to the Holy Spirit, and to the Word of God, in that Prayer of St. Paul for the Colossians, that *they might be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that they might walk worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good work,* &c. that is, by the means of a fuller understanding of the Will of God, Col. 1. 9, 10. And the co-operation of both these Causes for the producing of the same Effect, is yet more plainly expressed in those words of our Saviour's Prayer for his Disciples: *Sanctifie them through thy TRUTH: thy WORD is TRUTH;* where nothing can be more plain than this, that the holiness of Believers, is ascribed to the Operation of *Truth* upon their mindes, *viz.* that Truth which is revealed in the Gospel.

Seing then, that the Gospel is not onely in it self a proper means of converting the Unbeliever and the Disobedient, of confirming and improving the sincere Convert; but as you see the Graces of the Holy Spirit are those effects also, which the Scriptures frequently ascribe to the weightiness of those Reasons and Considerations that are offered to our understandings by the Word of God: We must be careful not to define the *manner* whereby the Holy Spirit worketh in the mindes of men to produce these Graces, so as to deny them to be the *Genuine* and proper effects of divine Truths; which is done by assigning such a manner of Operation to the Holy Spirit, as must needs be inconsistent with ascri-

## ascribing Conversion to the Operation of Truth.

Wherefore it is too boldly done of Dr. *Owen* and his Party, to affirm that Conversion is an effect of such an Operation of the Holy Spirit upon the minde, as makes it impossible for a man not to be converted, and withal that Conversion is impossible without such an *irresistible* Operation. For,

1. If a man must necessarily resist the whole strength of God's Word, till Conversion be wrought in him by an irresistible action of the Spirit, as these men teach; then 'tis plainly absurd to make Conversion to be an effect of God's Word. For upon this *Hypothesis* it contributes no more to a man's conversion, than the hurling of a Pebble does to the throwing down of a mighty Wall that is falling by the fury of the Cannon. If, as the Doctor saith, *the Will cannot make* p. 252. *use of that Grace for conversion which it can refuse;* if also it can resist all kinde of Perswasions, *Reasons, Arguments, and Motives*, as he himself supposes; and by consequence, that Operation of the Spirit whereby Conversion is caused be irresistible: What can be more evident than that Conversion must upon these terms be onely and wholly the effect of an irresistible power; and not at all of Reasons and Motives? To say that the Operations of the Spirit produce their effects irresistibly, because they are joyned with the *Word*, is to ascribe an irresistible Operation to the Word as well as to the Spirit; or rather, to make the irresistibleness to arise from the *concurrence* of both those Causes. Now, besides, that upon this *Hypothesis*, all men to whom the Gospel is made known would be converted, seeing we have proved

ved the ministration of the Gospel to be accompanied with the Operations of the Spirit in all that hear it: Besides this, I say, these men do not place the irresistible force by which Conversion, as they say, is wrought in the *concurrence* of the Word and the Spirit; but in the *sole Operation* of the Spirit. Now, that Conversion should at the same time be an effect of God's Word, which, as they say, a man cannot but resist till he is converted; and of such an Operation of the Spirit too as is altogether irresistible, is to me as unintelligible as Transubstantiation. For if it were onely said, that 'tis *possible* for a man to resist the Operations of Truth, and withal granted, that Conversion must as well be an effect of the truth of God's Word, as of the Holy Spirit's Operating in our mindes; it would plainly follow that his Operations were resistible. The reason is, because where an Effect depends upon the *concurrence* of two Causes, he that hath it always in his power to resist the force of one, is at any time able to frustrate the *other*, and consequently to hinder the effect. Now they themselves grant, and it is plain by daily experience that the Word of God may be resisted, and heard in vain, as it was, even when preached in the demonstration of the Spirit, and Power. Wherefore when the Operations of the Spirit conspire with the power of the Word to convert a sinner, if he can be obstinate against the latter, he may also quench the former; and then they are not irresistible. Furthermore it may be said, if Conversion be wrought irresistibly by the sole Operation of the Spirit; then the Word which *may be resisted*, is *unnecessary*: But if the Word *cannot but be resisted* till the effect is wrought by another power that is *invincible*, viz. that of the Spirit; then 'tis plain, that the effect is owing *onely*



only to that power; which is to render the whole Ministry of the Gospel utterly vain and useless, and to contradict all those passages of Scripture, which attribute our Conversion to the force of divine Truth. But

2. It is further evident from the manner of their explaining this irresistible Operation, that they exclude all the influence of God's Word from being a means of Conversion. Dr. Owen tells us that *the Holy Ghost is the immediate Author and cause of Regeneration*; and he is often putting us in minde, that we are converted by an *immediate Physical Operation* of the Spirit; which he endeavours to prove for many Pages together. Now a Physical Operation he opposeth to Moral, and thereby excludeth from it all use of any *Reasons, Arguments, and Motives* whatsoever, as he doth industriously more than once. Now what is more plain, than that to ascribe Conversion to such an Operation as this, is wholly to exclude the Word of God from being any way subordinate to that Grace whereby we are converted? For although the Doctor tells us sometimes, that he grants a *Moral Operation* of the Spirit, and that he onely denies the concurrence of that with the Word to be the *total cause of Conversion*; yet, by his leave, he does not make it so much as a *partial cause*. For if this *Physical Operation* onely; is that Grace which can remove all obstacles, and overcome all oppositions, and infallibly produce the effect intended, as he speaks; if this Operation doth not consist in the use of any motive whatsoever contained in the Word of God: Finally, if this Operation be the *immediate cause of Conversion*; if nothing intervenes between this Operation and the Effect: it is then plain, I conceive, that the Word of

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God is wholly excluded from being a means of Conversion: for neither is the use of any motive included in the nature of this Operation; nor does the Spirit use any motive, when he thus operates: for, as these men say, this Physical Operation is the immediate cause of Conversion: And now let any man tell me in what capacity the Word of God can stand, to be a means of Grace. In the mean time our Author, if you will believe him, pays a great regard to the Scriptures, which he does not onely render thus useless in general, but many plain testimonies whereof he contradicts in particular; and for instance, that passage in our Saviour's Prayer; *Sanctifie them through thy truth, thy Word is truth.* I desire him at his leisure to consider, whether the Grace which our Saviour prayed for in his Disciples behalf, were an immediate Physical Operation; if not, whether we are now sanctified by another sort of Operation than that which Christ prayed for.

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Now to say in expresse terms, that the Word of God is of no use in the conversion of a Sinner, would sound so horridly in any sober Christians Ears, that the Doctor himself has not ventured upon it; but on the contrary he is often perswading his Reader, that he attributes as much to the efficacy of the Word as any of them all: For he tells us; *Whereas some contend that the whole of the Grace of God consists in the effectual application of it unto the mindes and affections of men, whereby they are enabled to comply with it, and turn unto God by Faith and Repentance; they do not ascribe a greater power unto the Word than we do, by whom this administration of it is denied to be the Total Cause of Conversion.: For we assigne the same power to the Word as they do, and MORE also; onely*

only we affirm, that there is an effect to be wrought in this Work, which all this Power, if alone, is insufficient for. After a few such sayings as these, a man need not be ashamed to say any thing: For,

1. They who contend, that the *administration* of the Word by the Spirit applying it to the minde, is insufficient to cause Conversion, and that there is another action of the Spirit, wherein no use is made of the Word at all necessary to Conversion, do not attribute *so much power* to the Word as they do, who say the former is sufficient.
2. Much less do they so, if withal they pretend that this other Operation, is the immediate cause of Conversion, whereby the Word is excluded from intervening as a Means.
3. And yet much less, if they say this Operation produces the effect *irresistibly*; and till this irresistible act hath taken place, the Word is utterly *ineffectual*.
4. Least of all can it be pretended that they assigne *more power* to the Word, than their Adversaries do.

I wonder at this man's confidence to venture such open falshoods abroad as these are! It had been enough in conscience for a modest man to say, that those of our Author's opinion, ascribe *as much power* to the Word as we do; but to say, they assigne *more* to it, is too much in all reason to go for a *mere mistake*. And therefore one may well think, he saw clearly enough that he deser'd not *so much* to the Word as *we*; and that because he affirmed the contrary, he resolved to put on a Face for something, and say withal, that he ascribed *more*. For truly he may e'ne say *that*, as well as the *other*; for this passage of his is but the next Page before he asserts, and endeavours to prove for a great while together, that till the Soul is changed by his Physical Operation, the Word of God hath no more power to make a due impression



tion on it, no though the motives thereof be tra-  
ged by the internal perswasion of the Spirit, than  
you have to stir a Rock by speaking to it, or to  
raise a dead body from the Grave by a Sermon.  
And yet this is the manner that just before will  
make you believe, how he yields *as much* more  
*more* efficacy to the Word than we, who say, that  
Mankinde is not so incapable of being converted  
by the Word; but that when it is *blessed and*  
*used* (as he well enough expresseth it) by the  
Holy Spirit, it is sufficient to convert a man, with-  
out any such *Physical* Operation as they talk of.  
But, you see, this man makes it to be no more than  
a *Dead Letter*, even when it is *quickened* by the  
Spirit too; and after all his Flourishes, resolves  
Conversion into an *irresistible* Operation, in which  
there is no use of the Word at all. And this is  
enough to shew you what an irreverent opinion  
he has of it, whatever he pretends to the contrary.  
And so much for the first Proposition.

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## S E C T. 2.

2. The manner wherein the Holy Spirit acts  
upon the senses of men, is suitable to the rati-  
onal nature of Mankinde: Which is a truth so  
liberally expressed and liberally granted by Dr. C.  
that I shall need to say the less of it. For he  
saith, *The power which the Holy Ghost puts forth in the*  
*Regeneration, is such in its acting or exercise, as the*  
*Mind, Wills, and Affections are fitted to be wrought*  
*upon, and to be affected by according to their Na-*  
*tures and natural Operations. Again, he doth not*  
*act in them otherwise than they themselves are made*  
*to be acted according to their own Nature, Power,*  
*and Ability. He draws us with the Cord of a*  
*man.*

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man. And then he tells us the work it self is expressed by perswading and alluring; and that it carries no more repugnancy to our Faculties, than a prevalent perswasion doth. Again, that our mindes are not merely passive Instruments, (as formerly in Prophetical inspirations) moved above their own natural Capacity and Activity, as to the manner of Operation: But he works on the Mindes of men, in and by their own natural actions, through an immediate influence and impression of his Power. Lastly, that he offers no violence or compulsion to the Will: this, he saith, that Faculty is not naturally capable to give admission unto; if it be compelled, it is destroyed. These are very fair concessions; and unless you have given over wondering at our Author's way of writing, you would hardly believe they should drop from his Pen. But they are his own words I assure you; though Light and Darknes may be as soon reconciled as they can be to that Opinion concerning the manner of the Holy Spirit's Operations, which he so eagerly contends for. For if a *Physical* Operation immediately and irresistibly producing Faith and Holiness, be utterly unsuitable and repugnant to the natural faculties and operations of the minde, in which those effects are wrought: then is it most evident that those Concessions are inconsistent with the *Hypothesis* of Conversion by that *Physical* Work. Now let him tell me whether the minde of man is according to its Nature, and natural Operations, suited to be wrought upon by such a Power, as makes not the least use of the Understanding, of the least Thought, or intellectual Operation whatsoever; and whether the power of his *Physical* Operation be not such a power. Again, if Conversion be the immediate effect of this *Physical* Operation, is it not plain that the Minde is merely a passive Instrument

ment in its Conversion ? And yet further, if till the effect be irresistibly wrought by this *Physical* work, the *Minde* is unperswadable by any Reason and Argument ; does it not follow, that *Violence and Compulsion is in the highest manner offered to the Will* ? that is, ( for I know not what he should mean else by it ) that Conversion is not an act of the Will, but that a man is converted *without his Will* ; and that it is not his act, but God's only. Can our Author tell me what it is to *work upon* a rational intellectual Being, in a way suitable to its nature ; but to work upon it in an *intellectual* way, *i. e.* by convincing, by perswading, by prevailing, by the power of Truth ? But that irresistible power which he makes to be the immediate cause of Conversion, worketh not this way at all, but is contradistinguished to all use of reason whatsoever, and produceth its effect by *natural* necessity. So that you may as well say that a Clock strikes, and the Clapper makes the Bell sound, in an *intellectual manner*, as that such a power converts in a way suitable to the rational faculties of Mankind. If the immediate Operation of the Spirit, by which a man is converted, be *Physical*, as our Author will have it, and carries no force of reason with it ; the Soul is then moved, just as if it were a senseless *Machine*, which obeys indeed ( if you will so call it ) the necessary Laws of Motion ; but, I think, is not *suit'd to be wrought upon, and be affected according to the nature and the natural Operations of a reasonable Creature* as such. If the Soul were a mere Engine, our Author's *Physical Operation* would suit it well enough ; and then Perswasion would be as improper a means to make it do any thing suitable to its nature, as his *Physical Power* is to produce a *free consent*, immediately and irresistibly in an intellectual Agent.

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*The work of the Spirit*, which he contends for, ( if you will take his word ) *carries no more repugnance to our Faculties, than a prevalent persuasion doth.* This is one of his bold sayings; but he was wise enough not to say a word of the Physical Operation in all that Paragraph to which it belongs; for then the slowest Reader might have marked the Contradiction, since every body knows that a persuasion, be it never so *prevalent*, carries no repugnancy at all to our Faculties; because persuasion is the proper way of working upon a free Agent. But now I appeal to him whether any Operation can carry a more direct repugnance to them, than that Physical Omnipotent Operation he speaks of. And therefore if he will stand to this saying of his, he must confess, if he does like an honest man, that he was out, in affirming Conversion to be the immediate effect of such an Operation.

I know indeed he talks much of the Persuasion, or moral Operation of the Spirit; but as I shall let him see further in another place, it is onely to reproach it with insufficiency to convert the Sinner: And it is plain from his *Hypothesis*, that he does not make Conversion to be the effect of *persuasion* at all. For 'tis impossible it should, if,  
 1. It be an immediate effect of the Physical Operation; and, 2. If no persuasion will serve the turn, till that comes like a Hurricane and carries all before it; that is, till all opposition is born down without the assistance of Persuasion. For this man makes every unregenerate soul as inflexible by the persuasions and gentle breathings of the Holy Spirit, as the very Rocks are by a whispering Wind. Now if Persuasion can do nothing, then it is the Torrent of irresistible Power, that  
 must

must do all, or else a man can never be converted. And if this be the way of Conversion, a man may become a Convert when he thinks of nothing less, as well as when his thoughts are busied about it; nay 'tis all one whether he be sleeping, or waking; whether he dreams of it, or of something else. The habitual Villain stands as fair for Conversion, as a man of the most ingenuous Nature: And he may be converted as easily at the point of Death, as if he were to begin his Race again, and were not hardened by a custom in sinning. All which is contrary to the common sense of Mankind, and the constant experience of *Humane Nature*. One would have thought, that if the perswading Incitations and Motions of the Holy Spirit himself be long resisted by a Sinner, he is growing past all the methods of divine Grace. But while he is thus immoveable by the most convincing Arguments, and most powerful perswasions, little does the proud soul think, that there is a *Physical Operation* still behinde; and the moment may come, when his stubborn Will shall be brought down in spight of all resistance: But our Author knows 'tis so, and withal, that no man is converted but in this manner, *viz.* by an irresistible Operation, which moves the Soul no otherwise than as if it were a *stock* or a *stone*; because it is incurable by any method that is suited to the Nature of *Man*.

But after all, we must not pass by our Author's attempt of reconciling Conversion by this Physical work of the Spirit, with its being an act of our own choice: for, saith he, since *this Grace doth irresistibly prevail against all this opposition, and is without the mediation of any reason effectual and victorious over it, it will be enquired, and well it may,*

may, how this can any otherwise be done but by a kinde of violence and compulsion. He shews that no violence is offered to the Will, upon these terms, by two Answers; whereof the first is this, viz. That the enmity and opposition that is acted by the Will against Grace, is against it as objectively proposed to it. So do men resist the Holy Ghost; that is, in the external dispensation of Grace by the Word: And if that be alone, they may always resist it; (which you are not to wonder at, because) the enmity that is in them will prevail against it; Ye always resist the Holy Ghost. The meaning of all which is this, that a Sinner may resist the force of all reason and perswasion whatever, and that indeed his Will is invincible by it. Now thus he proceeds: The Will therefore is not forced by any power put forth in Grace in that way, wherein it is capable of making opposition unto it; but the prevalency of Grace is of it, as it is internal, working really and physically, which is not the object of the Will's opposition; for it is not proposed unto it, as that which it may accept or refuse, but worketh effectually in it. That is to say, the Will is not forced by perswasion, which it may resist; but it is forced by that Physical Operation which it cannot resist, and which does not leave any room either for accepting or refusing; so that because Conversion thus wrought, is not an act of our own choice; therefore no violence is offered to the Will when it is so converted; which is as much as to say, that because Conversion thus wrought is not chosen by the Will, therefore it is chosen by it. This Answer was so apparently absurd, that I thought fit to transcribe the whole Paragraph, lest they who have not the Doctor's Book at hand, might suspect that I had wronged him.



The substance of his second Answer is this: That at the same instant of time wherein the Will is acted, it acts it self; and by so doing preserves its own liberty in its Exercise. To which I reply, 1. That it cannot be said that the Will or the Soul, considered as a free Agent, does, as such, act any thing at that instant of time, when 'tis immediately and irresistibly converted by the Physical Act. If he means, indeed, that the Soul acts as my Pen does when I am writing; or as an Engine does when 'tis set a going, I grant it: but 'tis plain that no such action can properly be said to be an act of the Will, or a free action. 2. Yet further, whatever act you ascribe to the Will at that time, it cannot be truly pretended, that by this act the Liberty of the Will is preserved. The Reason is, because there is none to preserve about this matter of Conversion; since all the liberty which the Soul had, before that *Instantaneous Act*, as he elsewhere calls it, is utterly destroyed by it. For such is the nature of this Act, that it converts by a greater necessity of the same kinde, than that whereby Mechanical Causes produce their Effects; for it leaves it naturally impossible for the Soul not to be converted. Now if such an act be the immediate cause of Conversion, I do not see that there is the least regard had to the Souls being a free Agent in this manner of Conversion. But on the contrary, it seems plain, that the Soul is utterly deprived of all kinde of liberty in this matter: And if she has no liberty left to exercise, she has none to preserve, by any act you would have to be contemporary, with the irresistible Operation. Wherefore our Author's saying, that the Grace he speaks of, so acts our Wills, as that they also act themselves, and that freely; is a mere begging of the Question, instead of an Answer to the Objection propoun-

propounded. For, Whether it be possible for the Soul that is thus acted, to act *freely* at the same time, is the very thing in question. Perhaps he lays some stress upon those words used by him; that *there is herein an Inward, Almighty, Secret act of the power of the Holy Ghost*. For 'tis usual, when men contend for inexplicable and unintelligible notions in Divinity, to pretend they are Mysteries, and fly to God's omnipotence to fetch themselves off.

Now I think no man denies, that God can convert the greatest Sinner in a moment into a Saint, ( or, if he pleases, into an Angel ) by such a Physical act as this man speaks of. But then, 1. This could not be reconciled with supposing the rational use of our Faculties in being converted to God. Conversion would onely be a *necessary effect* of God's power, but no *free act* of our own. 2. It does not follow, that because God Almighty can convert a Sinner this way, therefore he will do it. But, 3. If it be granted that God always converts men in an *intellectual manner*, and that the Operations of the Spirit produce their effects in our mindes, in a way suitable to the rational nature of Mankind; it will follow that God never converts men in that manner, which our Author contends for, because so to do is inconsistent with a rational way of Conversion; and therefore *unsuitable to the nature, and the natural Operations of our mindes*. Lastly, since he grants that the Holy Spirit operateth in our mindes, *no otherwise than they are meet to be moved, according to their own nature and power*; it is clear from the premises, that by this concession he overthrows his own *Hypothesis* of Conversion by the *immediate, Physical and irresistible work*.

I shall conclude this matter with considering that remarkable Expostulation of Almighty God with the *Jews*, which we finde in *Isa. 5. 4. What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it?* By comparing the Parable with the Explication of it, *vers. 7.* you may observe,

1. That it was in their power to have turned to God; and therefore God had given them all that internal Grace which was necessary to Conversion: otherwise he had not expected their conversion, nor complained of their obstinacy, much less punished them with that severity threatned, *vers. 5.*
2. That they had not onely all necessary means and helps, but even such as were moreover profitable and advantageous in the way of conversion; so that it was not onely possible, but considering what God had done for them, it was very likely they would *turn*; and this is clearly signified by that greatness of expectation exprest by the *making of a Wine-press in the Vineyard, v. 2.*
3. God asks them what could be done more than had been done for them already. And yet,
4. They were all this while unconverted, and as bad as ever, *v. 4, 7.*

Now lay all these things together, and it follows, 1. That men *may be converted* without that measure of Grace, which makes it impossible for a man not to be so: for if, as the Doctor tells us, *the Will cannot make use of that Grace which it can refuse*, then God had not given these men that measure of Grace which was necessary to Conversion; for they refused, that is, they were not converted by that Grace which was imparted to them. Now if he had not done what was necessary for their Conversion, what reason had he to expect it? how could it be said sincerely, *What could have been done*



*done more ?* what justice had there been in punishing them with so much severity ?

2. It follows also, that 'tis possible for men not to be converted, when God hath done the utmost for his part that is meet to be done in order to their Conversion. For those words, *What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it ?* strongly imply, that he had done all to make it fruitful, that was any way proper for him to do ; and that the Jews could not reply with truth, that God had ever done more for the conversion of those that had actually repented, than he had done for them. Indeed if God pleased, he could have converted these obstinate creatures, by such an irresistible power as the Doctor ascribes Conversion to ; and therefore those words *What could have been done more ?* or as it is better expressed in the *Hebrew* Text *מה לעשות עוד* *i. e.* what *is to be* done more ? do not imply that God by his omnipotence could not have converted them ; but that no more remained to be done by him, in a way *meet* for him to use, towards the conversion of *reasonable Creatures*. According to which Explication the words of the Translation may be used well enough, *i. e.* What *could* have been done more, considering they were to be wrought upon as *Men* ? what is further *meet* to be done, unless they should be converted otherwise than as *Men* ; unless they were to be dealt with like *Creatures* that cannot reason and understand ; and were not to have the use of that liberty left them which belongs to their natures ? It is in this manner, I say, that the Question is to be understood, because no man can deny that in respect of absolute power, God could have converted them in spite of all their resistance : And then

it may be strongly concluded, that because he did not do so, therefore it was not by his wisdom judged meet and proper so to do : for if it had, and if this had ever been his *way* of converting Sinners ; that Question, *What is to be done more than I have not done ?* was not fit to be put to those men, who knew well enough that the Grace they had frustrated could not possibly be *irresistible* Grace. Finally, the no mention of any Reply made by that people to this upbraiding Question, (and if they had any Reply to make, it is exceeding probable that some notice had been taken of it, because God is pleased here to make them their own Judges, *vers.* 3, 7.) shews, that in those days either no such thing was dream'd of, as Conversion by irresistible Grace ; or if it were, that these men could not themselves *judge it meet* for Almighty God to convert them by it. Nor can any man judge so, who thinks it meet that the Operations of Grace should be suited to our reasonable natures ; unless he be a Slave to an *Hypothesis* : And commonly in that case men care not what they say.

### SECT. 3.

3. Since it is evident from the Holy Scriptures that God requires and expects we should put forth our own endeavours after all those things, which the Spirit is given to work in us ; it follows, that such is the *manner* of the Holy Spirit's Operations, that they do not make our own diligence and care unnecessary to the attaining of them ; but that his Operations will do us no good if our own endeavours be wanting. The reason is, because it were high presumption to say, that although  
God

God requires us to be active and diligent, it may be never the worse for us, though we be lazie; which might be said, on supposition that the *Graces* of the Spirit might be attained without any industry of our own. Now we are commanded in the Scripture, to *work out our salvation with fear and trembling*, although it be presently said, that *God worketh in us both to will and to do*. Wherefore God's working in us doth not render our own *care to will and to do* unnecessary to that end; especially if you consider, 1. That God's Operation is brought in as a reason why we should work: Now it would be very strange, that God should use that for a reason to us, why we should work out our Salvation, which is on the other hand a clear reason why we need not. Wherefore it is again evident, that God doth not work his Graces in us *irresistibly*; nor is that manner of Operation supposed in the Text: For if it were, then 'tis plain that our own *negligence* cannot hinder the effect of his working; nay, not the utmost resistance we can make, that is, our working the quite contrary way, cannot prevent it: and I refer it to any man of common sense, if this be not a temptation to carelessness, instead of a motive to industry. 2. Much less would the Apostle have added, *With fear and trembling*, if our own industry were not necessary to the attainment of those Graces, which God is said to *work* in us. Therefore also they are not wrought by an irresistible Operation: For there could be no cause for *Fear and Trembling*, if we could not possibly miscarry through our own negligence. But as long as God worketh in us irresistibly to Will and to Do, there can be no possibility of miscarrying; and consequently no ground for that *Fear and Trembling*, which should increase our diligence.



gence. Dr. Owen tells us upon this place, that *To say God doth onely perswade us, or excite and stir up our Wills by his Grace to put forth their own acts, is to say, he doth not do what the Apostle affirms him to do; That is, that he doth not work in us both to Will and to Do.* To which I answer; that to say God worketh in us both to Will and to Do, not onely by exciting and stirring up our wills to put forth their own acts; but by making it utterly impossible for us not to Will and to Do, is to say, that we have *no cause at all to work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling*, which the Apostle plainly exhorts us to. I do not say, that God *doth* not what the Apostle *affirms him to do*; but I say, the meaning of those words is this, that God worketh in us what is on his part requisite for our willing and doing, by stirring up our Wills to put forth their own Acts; which, for all that, they may not put forth. That this is the true interpretation of the words, I prove thus: 1. Because their connexion with the Exhortation does manifestly require it, as you will confess, if you do but observe how the Apostles discourse must run according to the Doctor's interpretation, *viz.* "I assure ye all to whom I write, that God worketh in you *all things that appertain to your Obedience and Salvation* (*those are the Doctor's own words*) "and that by an irresistible Operation, so as it is "not possible for you not to will or to do whatsoever is necessary to Salvation: therefore I seriously exhort you to be very careful, even with "Fear and Trembling, that ye both will and do "all such things, lest you miscarry through your "own negligence and disobedience. Than which nothing could be more absurd. 2. Because God is frequently said, in the Scripture, to *do those things*, for the effecting of which he hath contributed means

means and help sufficient, although the things themselves do not actually come to pass. Of this manner of speaking I might give you many instances; but these few that follow will put the thing out of question. In *Jer. 51. 9.* God saith concerning *Babylon*, דפאנו את-בבל *We have healed Babylon, but she is not healed.* The common Translation, *We would have healed*, being rather a right Exposition, than Translation of the words. The same thing God saith of *Hierusalem*, *Ezek. 24. 13.* *Because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, i. e.* God would afford them the means and opportunities of Conversion no longer, because they had already obstructed the efficacy of them so long together. And then by his purging *Hierusalem*, it is plain nothing can be meant, but his doing all that was proper for him to do in order to that end, and which would certainly have accomplished it, had they complied as they might with his gracious methods. Thus also the goodness of God is said to lead them to Repentance, who are not actually led by it, being such as after their hardness and impenitent hearts, treasure up wrath unto themselves against the day of wrath, *Rom. 2. 4, 5.* The meaning is plainly this, that the forbearance and Grace of God, is a most sufficient means of bringing those to repentance, who do not onely neglect what they ought to do in compliance with the goodness of God, but harden their Hearts against it. Thus we see the holy Scripture does ascribe unto God the honour of what he does toward the conversion of those Sinners that continue in impenitence, by saying that he has converted and healed them, even while they are yet in their sins; hereby intimating to us, that it was not through any defect of Grace on his part, but



but onely through their own falling to excite such endeavours, as they might have done, that they were not actually reformed. Now in like manner, and according to the usual stile of the Scripture, God may be said to *Work*, even in those men, *to Will and to Do*, who are still *unwilling and disobedient*; and therefore that Phrase does not necessarily import, that God does *more than excite and stir up our Wills* by his Grace; or that he does not leave it possible for us to obstruct the efficacy of his Operations. For we see the Scripture supposes God's administring of those gracious Helps, which are abundantly sufficient to make us true Converts, to be ground enough for saying that he hath converted us. Wherefore if the Words themselves are capable of such a meaning; if the scope also and designe of the place does necessarily require such a meaning, I know not what can be required more to prove this to be the true meaning of them, *viz.* that God worketh in us to Will and to Do in that manner, that if our own care and diligence be wanting, we may neither *will* nor *do*, but continue in our sins, and perish everlastingly.

Further, whereas God is said to *give Repentance and a new Heart*, it is from hence plain that the meaning of such places is not this, that he does *all* himself, and leaves nothing for us to do that we may be converted; because he commands us often to do those things which he is yet said to do for us. Thus, as it is said in Ezek. 36. 26. *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you — and cause you to walk in my statutes:* (which words considered by themselves, run as if God had absolutely undertaken to do this for his People, and they needed not now to trouble



trouble themselves with doing any thing towards it : ) So by the same Prophet God requires them to *Cast away from them all their transgressions, to make themselves a new heart and a new spirit; for, saith he, why will ye die, O house of Israel?* Ezek.

18. 31. From whence it is plain, that notwithstanding God's promise of giving them a new Heart, it was necessary for them to Renew their own Hearts: And what can this signifie, but that the Promise is not absolute, but supposeth the concurrence of our own endeavours, and consequently that it was given to encourage them; but not to make them needless? And this will be more evident to you, if you consider, that what the Lord promised to do in this kinde for his People, was not done for some of them, as you may see in Ezek. 11. 19, 20, 21. *I will put a new spirit into them, and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh, That they may walk in my statutes, &c. But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things, and their abominations, I will recompence their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord God.* From whence the needfulness of their own care to walk in God's Statutes is most evident; for if no such condition had been implied in the Promise, none of them could have walked after their Abominations.

Finally, Since the Holy Spirit is not onely promised to work in us all needful Qualifications for eternal Life; but we are also Commanded, Exhorted, Entreated, and that most Seriously, Affectionately, and Frequently, to Repent and be Converted, and to persevere in Holiness; and all this with promises of an eternal Reward if we do, and with threatnings of everlasting Punishment if we do not;

not; it follows that the Spirit is not promised to work his Graces in our Hearts, in such a manner, as to make our own endeavours unnecessary to the attainment of them: For this were to make all those Commands and Exhortations of God's Word a solemn piece of Pageantry, and to say that God hath required us under the greatest penalties, and with the most alluring promises, to obtain those Qualifications which will be thrust upon us, though we do nothing to obtain them. Wherefore I conclude, that the Holy Spirit worketh no otherwise in the mindes of men, than to leave them under as great an obligation to be diligent in the use of all proper means for their recovery and perseverance, as if they had not the benefit of any such divine Operation, but were left (if it had been possible for them) to do all themselves.

#### SECT. 4.

4. It may be added, that the Operations of *the Holy Spirit* upon the mindes of men, are suited or proportioned to their present spiritual state. He does not produce those effects in us *all at once*, which the Scripture ascribes to divine Grace; but in such an Order, and by those Degrees that suit with our capacities and qualifications. This is partly evident, 1. From what hath been already said concerning the communications of special Grace, the promises whereof are made onely to Believers and good men; the Holy Spirit doth not form his other graces in us, till he hath wrought an hearty belief of the Gospel in our Souls: Nor does he *dwell* in them, till they are purged from the love of sin and this world. And since

since there are various degrees of holiness, according to which good men differ from each other; since also our Saviour hath told us, that *to him that hath, more shall be given*; we may conclude that the communications of the Holy Spirit are not made in *equal* measures to all good men neither; but according as their mindes are more or less raised towards the *heavenly* state: And that the more perfect Christian enjoys a more plentiful *influence* of Grace from above, and is more sensibly affected with those joys of the Holy Ghost which increase the love of Virtue, and confirm him in every divine disposition. 2. This is further evident from those passages in Holy Writ, where we are required to *grow in grace*, to *abound in the work of the Lord*, and to *go on to perfection*. For these places, and the like, do strongly imply, that we cannot on a sudden arrive to any degree of goodness which we fall greatly short of at present, much less that we can presently be *filled with the fulness of God*. Wherefore it plainly follows, that the Holy Spirit does not affect our mindes, when we begin the Christian life, in the same manner and measure that he moveth us in after we have made some progress in it, or shall arrive to such an eminent degree of Christianity as may answer that expression of being *filled with the fulness of God*. For if it were thus, then we might become *Men in Christ* as soon as we are *Babes*; and come to the *fulness of our stature* without growing, and going on to perfection. It is further observable, that the Word of God is affirmed to be the means of our increasing in holiness; we must *desire the sincere Milk of the Word*, that we may grow thereby, as St. Peter tells us: and in Col. 1. 9. St. Paul instructs us, that the way whereby the Spirit maketh us to walk worthy of the



*the Lord unto all well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good work; is by filling us with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.* From whence I observe, that our improvement in holiness is greater or lesser, according as we consider and meditate upon divine Truths, *viz.* for this end of governing our lives by them, which is to know them in *Wisdom and spiritual Understanding.* Now since the effects of the Holy Spirit's Operation in our mindes, are, as I have shewn, the genuine and proper effects of the Word of God, seriously considered and laid to heart; it follows, that the Holy Spirit worketh in us according to that measure wherein divine Truths are considered by us: Therefore since our fruitfulness depends upon our *increasing in the knowledge of God*, or that *spiritual Understanding* which the Apostle speaks of; the Holy Spirit who worketh in us by the Word of God, does not make us capable of arriving to that state of walking before the Lord in *all well-pleasing*, all at once, but by degrees, *viz.* as we *increase in the knowledge of God* by daily Meditation.

Lastly, since by the experience we have of Humane Nature we see, that customes are not easily and presently put off; and that matters of difficulty cannot be made familiar to us, but by use and practice; more particularly, that they who are *accustomed to do evil*, cannot of a sudden *learn to do well*; that ill habits are not wasted but by degrees; that the difficulties of a Religious life press most upon us when we first enter upon it; and that they wear away insensibly by continuance in well-doing; likewise that vertue is improved by exercise, and that *the Path of the just*, as the Wise man speaks, *is as the shining light, that shineth*

*shineth more and more unto the perfect day:* ' I say, this being considered, we must needs acknowledge that the Holy Spirit does not produce the effects of his Grace in the mindes of men all at once; but that he accommodates his Operations to the state in which they are at present, prompting them to that amendment which the measure of their capacity will admit. And this I take to be a \* Consequence also of what the Doctor so fully grants, *viz.* that the Spirit *acts the mindes of men,* onely as they are meet to be acted, according to their own Nature, Power, and Ability, and according to their natural Operations: For if we may trust the constant experience of Mankind, both of the good and the bad, although an evil habit is sooner contracted than a good one; yet none is gained without some use and exercise; and ordinarily it cannot be otherwise. Now if the Spirit moves us no otherwise than according to the Nature, Power, and Ability of our mindes; we must not think that by his Grace we may leap out of a wicked course of life, in a moment, into the habits of Piety and Virtue; but that he is in that manner present with us, as to enable us to make a good beginning, and if we do so, that by his more abundant Grace we may proceed, and so by degrees come to a divine temper of minde, and to *walk worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing.*

\* If I forget not, he acknowledges it somewhere in express terms.

There is no doubt but God, if he pleaseth, can in an instant change the most vicious man into a Saint; but we have no more reason to think that he will do so, than that he should work new Miracles to convert us. But we have great reason to perswade us that he will not do so; for if we may judge of the Manner and Measure of the Holy



Holy Spirit's Operations, by the promises of special Grace, which belong onely to qualified and prepared persons; or by the Commands of the Scripture to grow in Grace, and in the knowledge of *Christ*; or by the general experience of Humane Nature: we may conclude, that an habitual Sinner cannot become a good man in an instant. He must first learn to be afraid of God's angry Justice; he must be heartily sorry for his sins; he must deeply consider the promises of the Gospel; he must avoid the occasions of sin, and fortifie himself with vehement resolutions to forsake his wicked course; and he must make many earnest prayers before he can subdue his Lusts, and overcome the world, and yield a sincere obedience to all the Commands of God. And by consequence, he cannot expect that the Operations of the Holy Spirit should make him a holy man, but by the former means; and therefore by degrees.

This Consideration ought not to have been omitted; because it may be of great use to two very different sorts of men.

1. To those who have been long accustomed to a sinful course of life, and think it impossible to recover themselves, although they have the opportunities of amendment before them. For it happens sometimes, that such men wish they had taken an early care to live in the fear of God, and the practice of Religion and Virtue; but they believe it is now in vain to strive against those fatal habits, which are so deeply rooted in their mindes; and so they abandon themselves to carelessness and desperation. The reason whereof is commonly this; that when they attempted their own reformation, and had purposed to lead a new life, they



they soon found themselves surprized again by their former temptations, and carried away as strongly by their sensual appetites as ever they were before; which makes them conclude, it is to no purpose to take any more pains with themselves: as if, because their freedom from the servitude of sin could not be effected in a few moments, it cannot be procured at all. It many times hinders a good beginning, that a man findes he cannot become a Convert in an instant, and thence concludes that it can never be better with him than it is at present; which he will be the more ready to do, if he has heard that Conversion is a thing that comes by a snatch, and an *Instantaneous Act*; and that unless the work be done all of a sudden, (which he findes it will not be) it can never be done. But this is a Doctrine so pernicious to the Souls of men, that the mischief of it were sufficient, to prove it false. For if it were true, it were then in vain for an habitual sinner at least to attempt his own recovery; since a custom in sin cannot be suddenly broken, without a Miracle, but must be worn away by contrary practices, or not at all. It will require some time, and much patience, to unlearn a way of life that is grown customary and natural, and to make the contrary habitual and easie. But by assiduity and constancy the thing may be done: Therefore if a man has entertained any serious thoughts of Repentance, he ought not to discourage himself, though he findes his affection to sin hard to put off; nor to give up himself for a lost person, when he is again overtaken by a Temptation; but to renew his resolutions more vigorously, and to pray more frequently and earnestly; and to keep on thus in a way of well-doing: for there is not the least doubt, but by this means, every day something will

will be done, to the bettering of his minde, and the making of a good life more easie and ready to him; till he has gained the true liberty of the Sons of God.

2. This very Consideration, which is of good use against *despairing* to prevail, if a man that has yet the opportunity, desires to amend his life; is also a good Antidote against the madness of *deferring* our Repentance upon a *presumption* that we can repent and turn to God when we please. For if it be not in the power of a wicked man, while he is thus flattering himself, to repent this present moment; he has no reason to think that he may suddenly repent any time hereafter. The most that is in his power at present, is to do something in order to Repentance, or Conversion; but that is not to repent: The utmost he can do, is to begin well; but that is not doing the thing. Now the longer he is thus trifling with himself, his evil habits contract more stubbornness, and will require more time to break them; and yet he has less time to do it in than he had before. Nor is it likely that he will begin hereafter while he has any time before him; for the reason why a man defers his reformation to another time, is not because he intends to begin *then*; but because he has no minde to begin *now*; and unless he be *then* in a better minde than he is at present, he will certainly defer his Repentance still; nor is there any probability that he will finde himself better disposed after he has added Iniquity to Iniquity, and made himself more a Child of the Devil than he was before. And indeed it commonly happens, that they who cheat themselves in this manner, run out their foolish presumption almost to the length of their Lives, till the terrors of *death* make



make them serious ; and *then*, I fear, 'tis too late to make a good *beginning* : For what good should it do a man, to promise that he will mend his life, now he can live no longer ; or to resolve that he will spend his time better ; when he has no more to spend ?

To conclude, if the Conversion of a wicked man be a work of some time, and requires much diligence and preparation : If, so far as we can judge by several Promises and Exhortations in holy Writ, and by the experience of Mankind, the Operations of the Spirit move Unregenerate men according to their present capacities ; for instance, either to Fear, if they be yet Fearless ; or to Sorrow, if they have yet little or no Remorse ; or to Care, if they are ready to run upon Temptations, and the like. If the Holy Spirit enables them to mend their state by such Degrees and Means, till their lusts and evil habits be subdued ; then, as they that have lived a wicked life, and yet enjoy the opportunity of Repentance, have no reason to despair of their Conversion, merely because they cannot break the power of their Lusts, and overcome the world all at once ; so neither has any man the least reason to presume that he can repent when he pleases, and thereupon to neglect the present opportunity : For all that he can do at present, is to make a good beginning ; and not to do that immediately, when upon this moment my eternal state may depend, what a madness is that !

#### SECT. 5.

To all that hath been said, we may further adde,  
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that the Holy Spirit moves upon the mindes of men in a most *familiar* way ; and that his *Motions* are not discernible by us, from the *natural Operations* of our mindes. We feel them no otherwise than we do our own Thoughts and Meditations ; we cannot distinguish them by the manner of their affecting us, from our natural Reasonings, and the Operations of Truth upon our Souls. This imperceptibleness of the impressions made upon our Souls by the divine Spirit, was that, which ( as I told you before, *Chap. 3. Sect. 10.* ) our Saviour signified to *Nicodemus* by the Similitude of the *Wind*, *Joh. 3.* And we are not to wonder that the Holy Spirit does move our Souls, when we are not conscious to our selves of any supernatural Influence which they are acted by ; since he can communicate Reason and Perswasion to them, without making use of any thing that belongs to our bodily Structure, and much more of our external Senses ; without which it is impossible for *us* to convey our Thoughts and Reasonings to one another's mindes : Wherefore the Holy Spirit being *intimate to our Souls* ( which is a good expression of the Doctor's, used to another purpose ) can affect us, when we are not *sensible* of it, and produce effects upon our mindes, in that manner, as if they were merely the effects of our own natural reasoning, and such consideration of divine Truth, as we can excite in our selves and in one another.

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Such is the manner of the Spirit's Operations in us, that if God had onely designed to give the Holy Spirit to us, without making any mention of it in his Word, we could never have known, unless it had been communicated to us by some private Revelation, that our Souls are moved

moved by a *divine Power* when we love God and do his Will; which, as I take it, the Doctor seems to grant in those words of his; that this is a *subject*, in the handling whereof *we have nothing to give us assistance but pure Revelation*; which are large words; but, according to a candid construction, very true. But this, I think, may at least be inferred from them: That without Revelation we could not have known that the Spirit operates in the mindes of men, in order to their Regeneration: And consequently, that his Operations are imperceptible by us now; for if we were sensible that the Holy Spirit moves us, we might argue from our own *sense*, as well as from Revelation, that the Spirit is given to us.

Wherefore the best rule we can have to know when we are moved by the Holy Spirit, must be taken from the Nature and End of his Operations. When we finde our selves inclined to that which is good, when we are bent upon the doing of God's Will, when we perform our Duty, and govern our Actions by the Word of God; then we may conclude that we are acted by a divine Spirit; and that therefore we have occasion given us of humble and thankful Praises. But if we forsake the steady rules of our duty, written upon our Hearts in our Creation, or in the Bible by the inspired Messengers of God; and take every violent impulse that we feel within us, for a suggestion of the Holy Spirit, we may easily mistake a brutish Inclination, or a suggestion of the Devil, for divine direction; since no sort of men are acted with a more sensible and impetuous zeal, than they that are strongly led by the Devil and their own corrupt affections. Therefore, unless we will expose our selves to Fanatical and Diabo-



lical delusions, we must keep close to *Reason* and *Scripture*, and try the nature of all the impulses and motions of our mindes by them: We must not pretend that the Spirit inciteth us to such an action, and therefore 'tis warranted by the *Scripture*; for *the motions of the Spirit are in themselves imperceptible*: But we must first see what the *Scripture* would have us do, and then if we have a minde to that, we may conclude that the Spirit hath moved us to it; for the Spirit inclineth us onely to what is good; and the *Scripture* is a *steady and unalterable rule of that*. These are very plain and evident truths, and yet we can hardly say too much to possess the mindes of men with the apprehension of them; since we can remember what infinite dishonours have been done to God in the late times, by men professing Godliness, and pretending to the *special Guidance* of the Spirit; how they asked counsel of God whether they should commit *Murder* and *Treason*, *Rebellion* and *Sacrilege*; how they thought to justify the most execrable Parricide (as the Doctor knows who did) that was ever heard of in these parts of the World; and how blasphemously they pretended that *the Lord had put these things into their Hearts*.

God does not now give the Spirit to *justify* the actions of men, but to *assist* them in those that are good; and *he hath shewn us what is good*, partly by the light of Nature, which is common to all men; and compleatly by the publick revelation of his Will contained in the *Scriptures*. Wherefore since the Operations of the Spirit are imperceptible by us, and merely an object of our *Faith*, we have no other way of assuring ourselves that we follow the guidance of the Spirit, but



but by following the rule of God's Word.

To this purpose it is observable, that the word *Spirit* does sometimes signifie the Gospel, as several *Divines* have proved, and particularly when *St. Paul* does oppose the *Spirit* to the *Flesh*, as in *Gal. 3. 3.* *We are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh; i. e. we are the true Children of Abraham who worship God according to the Gospel, placing no confidence in the observation of Moses's Law.* And in *Gal. 5. 16.* *Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh, i. e. walk according to that Law of Love, vers. 14. which the Gospel so strictly prescribes; and do not yield to inclinations of Revenge, Hatred, Variance, &c. vers. 20.* But, at least, in these and the like places, 'tis indifferent whether by the word *Spirit*, you understand the Gospel, or the Holy Ghost; because it is in effect the same thing, to be led by the Spirit, and to obey the Gospel.

Thus when the Apostle, *Rom. 8.* so often notes the difference between those that walk after the *Flesh*, and those that walk after the *Spirit*; we may easily see, that *walking after the Spirit* may indifferently be interpreted, either by living according to the rules of the Gospel, or by following the perswasion of a well-instructed Minde or Conscience, or by obeying the motions of the Holy Spirit of God. For to do one of these things, is to do them all; since they are the Precepts of the Gospel, which the Conscience ought to be directed by; and 'tis the obedience of the Gospel to which the Holy Spirit doth move and incite us,

We may observe also, that in this Chapter these following expressions are equivalent, *viz.* *To walk after the Spirit*, v. 1. *To be freed from the law of sin*, v. 2. *To minde the things of the Spirit*, v. 5. *To be spiritually minded*, v. 6. *To be subject to the law of God*, v. 7. *To please God*, v. 8. *To have the Spirit of Christ*, v. 9. *Christ being in us*, v. 10. *The Spirit of God dwelling in us*, v. 11. *Mortifying the deeds of the body by the Spirit*, v. 13. And *being led by the Spirit*, v. 14. These several Phrases, I say, do all express the same state, *viz.* our being the true Disciples of *Christ*; onely they conspire to express the same thing under different respects: That of *being subject to the Law of God*, respecting the rule of our Lives, as that of *minding the things of the Spirit*, regards that serious consideration of the Doctrines of the Gospel, which disposeth us to walk according to that Rule. *To be freed from the Law of sin*, notes the same thing, with respect to our former condition. *Not to be carnally but spiritually minded*; *not to live after the flesh, but to mortifie the deeds of the body by the Spirit*, are expressions that principally regard the prevalency of our Conscience over our sensual Appetites. *The Spirit of God dwelling in us*, is an expression of that constant readiness in good men to do the Will of God, which is cherished in them by the Holy Spirit; as our *having the Spirit of Christ* seems principally to regard that likeness to him, which we gain by becoming such persons. Finally, *to walk after the Spirit*, or *to be led by the Spirit*, are Phrases which seem to take in all these respects indifferently.

Now because it is really one and the same state and disposition, that is signified by these Phrases, there can be no dangerous mistake incurred if a man



man should understand any one of them, under a respect which perhaps was not principally intended; as for instance, if by *the Spirit of God dwelling in us*, he should understand our being strongly and deeply affected with divine Truths; for where the *Word of God dwells richly*, there the Spirit of God dwells too. Nay I may adde further, that there is no need of being curious to mark what respect was principally aimed at by the Apostle in the use of these Phrases throughout *Rom. 8.* and likewise *Gal. 5.* and other places; and that because the Apostle does not seem to be curious in the use of them himself: Nor was it necessary for him so to be, in order to the making good of that conclusion against the *Jews* which he aimed at, *viz.* that Justification was not to be had by the works of the Law, but by the faith of *Christ*; *i. e.* by being a true Disciple of *Christ*, in mortifying the Flesh, with its Affections and Lusts. But on the other hand, his using of those Phrases of being *led by*, and *walking after the Spirit*, indifferently for living according to the Gospel, and being governed by the motions of the Holy Spirit, was very suitable to his designe of shewing that Justification was no other way to be obtained, but by being a true Christian: For since mortifying of the deeds of the body, and being subject to the Law of God in that degree which Christianity now required, were necessary to *Justification*, the Jew who rejected the Gospel of *Christ* must needs be under *Condemnation*; because the Holy Spirit, whose guidance and incitations were necessary to the subduing of sin, was given for that purpose to none that rejected Christianity. Wherefore as long as the *Jew* would not submit to *the Law of the Spirit of Life*, *i. e.* to the Gospel, to the profession whereof the special promise of the Spirit



was made, he must needs be subject to the *Law of Sin* and of *Death* : Of *sin*, because he refused the necessary means of subduing the lusts of the *Flesh*; viz. the *Faith* of the *Gospel*, which was to refuse the *Incitations* and *Grace* of the *Spirit*. Of *Death*, because if *we live after the Flesh we shall die*.

This Observation I thought might not prove altogether unuseful to well-meaning persons, that have not hit on it before; for a man may well be in danger of-mistaking the Apostle's designe in this and other places, where the fore-mentioned Phrases are promiscuously used, if he expects that every one of them should have a peculiar mystery belonging to it, and a sence quite different from all the rest.

But that which I chiefly intended, was to observe, that the promiscuous use of those Phrases in the holy Scripture, is extreamly agreeable to that *familiar* way wherein the Holy Spirit moveth the mindes of men. For if we are so moved by him that we are not sensible of any operation in our mindes, but that of divine Truth, as it is represented to us by ordinary means, and thereupon embraced by our Understandings; then we cannot better express our being led and guided by the Spirit, than by saying that *we obey the Gospel*. And thus you see a further reason of the promiscuous and indifferent use of the above-mentioned Phrases, and that taken from the *manner* of the Holy Spirit's Operations, as the former was from the *end* and designe of them.

I shall conclude this point, with inferring from what hath been said concerning it, that we resist the

the Holy Spirit of God, many times, when we think of nothing less; and we do not, think of it, because we do not feel that supernatural impression which is made upon us, and cannot discern it from the free and natural Operations of our minds. And thus we quench the motions of the Spirit very often, when we imagine that we onely quarrel with our own Thoughts, or reject the good counsels of a Friend, or the exhortations of a Minister, or the rebukes of our own Conscience. Now if we could hear or apprehend the Holy Spirit disswading us from any wickedness, as sensibly as when a good man speaks to us; we should not dare, surely, to entertain one thought more of going forward. A temptation could no more prevail against us if we were thus admonish'd, than if God should speak to us from Heaven with an audible voice, in these words; *O do not that wicked thing which I hate.* But God doth not use this method upon us, because we are here to live by Faith; because he will prove us, whether we believe his Word or not. Therefore, if it be plain from the holy Scriptures, that when we are sinning against the clear Convictions of our duty, when we are baffling any good Exhortations and Counsels, and our own hopes of Heaven, or our fears of Hell, or the force of any seasonable good thought tending to Repentance; we do then as really contradict the perswasions of the blessed Spirit, as if we heard his Voice sounding in our Ears; shall we not be as much afraid to do the former, as we should be to do the latter? For it will not be admitted in our excuse, that we did not *think* of rebelling against the Holy Spirit; for our not thinking of it is another fault, since we have reason to believe, that every sin we commit against the checks of Conscience, has that aggravation,  
and



and why should we think that one fault will excuse another? Wherefore if we cannot but acknowledge, that the *doing of despite to the Spirit of Grace*, must needs adde an heavy weight to *every sin* which we commit presumptuously, and to every neglect of *improving an inclination to Repentance*; methinks we should tremble to *do* the one, or to *delay* the other. Finally, the consideration of this matter, if we have any due reverence of God, will not fail of making all good counsels profitable to us, of giving strength to all our own good purposes, and making us careful to improve by all reasons that are proper to convince us, by all Examples that are fit to instruct us; and by all opportunities of serious reflection upon our selves: For the Operations of the Holy Spirit do conspire with such familiar methods, as these are, to produce his Graces in us.

## SECT. 6.

From all these things, it follows in the last place, that the Operations of the Holy Spirit in our minds are *Assistances* or *Helps*; as they are generally called by Christians of all persuasions, not excepting our Author, and the Friends of his way. But I say also, they are properly so called; because the Operations of the Spirit are no more than *Assistances*; and that because his *Graces* are truly and properly the effects of other Causes, *viz.* of the ministration of the Gospel, of the external means of Grace, and of our own endeavours; with all which the Operations of the Holy Spirit conspire for the producing of those effects in us. The Spirit is indeed the principal cause of these effects, and therefore they are called his  
Graces;



*Graces* ; and ascribed to him as if we did nothing our selves to gain them ; according to that saying of the Apostle ; *I laboured abundantly, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me*, 1 Cor. 15. 10. But because they are our own *free acts*, therefore *He* is not the *only* cause of them. The Holy Spirit doth not regenerate us in that manner, as to do *all* himself, and leave nothing for us to do in order to our regeneration ; but we are as much concerned to use all proper means of Regeneration, as if the whole matter depended upon our single endeavours, as I shewed *Señ. 4.* and that which I say of *Regeneration*, is equally true of every particular *Grace* of the Holy Ghost.

It is this Supposition, *viz.* that the Operations of the Spirit are *Aids* and *Helps* to our natural Faculties , which makes the ascribing of all Christian Virtues to his *Grace* consistent with leaving the *use of our Reason*, and those *duties which depend thereupon*, necessary to the attainment of them : Which our Author understood so well, that in his Preface, where he complains so tragically of the Reproaches that are cast upon those that *dare take upon them to defend the work of the Spirit* , he pretends to plead for nothing else but the *Aids* and *Assistances* of the Spirit ; very well knowing that they do not *impugn the use of reason in Religion*, as his Phrase is ; and withal, that this Objection is produced by his Adversaries against nothing but his opinion of the *irresistible* manner of the Spirit's Operations ; which, very wisely, he says not one word of through his whole Preface. *The only inconvenience*, saith he, *wherewith our Doctrine is pressed*, is the pretended difficulty in reconciling the nature and necessity of our Duty, with the efficacy of the *Grace of the Spirit* ; and I have been so far from wa-  
ving

Pref. 3. o.

ving the consideration of it, as that I have embraced every opportunity to examine it in all particular instances wherein it may be urged with most appearance of probability. And it is, I hope, at length made to appear, that not onely the necessity of our duty is consistent with the efficacy of God's Grace; but also that as on the one hand we can perform no duty to God as we ought, without its *AID* and *ASSISTANCE*, nor have any encouragement to attempt a course of obedience without a just expectation thereof: So on the other, that the work of Grace it self is no way effectual, but in our compliance with it in a way of duty; onely with the leave of some persons, or whether they will or no, we give the Pre-eminence in all unto Grace, and not unto our selves. And now who would not believe that there are some amongst us, who do not give the Pre-eminence in all unto Grace, nay, and think that if we cannot perform our duty as we ought, without the *Aid* and *Assistance* of the Spirit, that the nature of Duty, and the use of Reason in it is destroyed; and withal that this man has spent a *Folio* of railing upon us, because we denied the *Aids* of Grace and the internal Operations of the Holy Ghost? Why any man, saith he, should be discouraged from the exercise of that industry which God requires of him, by the consideration of the *AID* and *ASSISTANCE* which he hath promised unto him, I cannot understand. No truly, nor I neither, nor any man that has common sense: For is it possible that a man should be discouraged from industry, because he is promised that help, without which his industry would not prevail? But what is the reason that we hear nothing at all now but of *Aids* and *Assistances*, when the Operations of the Spirit are mentioned? Did the Doctor's Adversaries ever urge any Objections against them? Was the inconvenience where-  
with



*with his Doctrine of irresistible Grace is pressed, ever charged by them, upon the Aids of the Spirit? When and where did any of them, with, or without whose leave he was resolved to write his Book, pretend that the Supposition of the Aids of Grace, was liable to the inconvenience he promiseth to remove? Or rather, what can this man say to palliate so foul an Imposture! Let others, as he goes on, do what they please, I shall endeavour to comply with the Apostles advice upon the enforcement which he gives unto it; Work out your own salvation, &c. for it is God which worketh, &c. By all means Sir endeavour it; but do not endeavour to perswade the World, that the reason why you persecute us with bitter words, is because we are not like to be pleased with you for taking the Apostles reason to follow his advice. Or if you continue to insinuate this belief of us, and to make folks think*
p. 21.
*that the principal cause and occasion of your present undertaking, was the open and horrible Opposition, that is made unto the Spirit of God and his work in the World, since, as you go on, there is no concernment of his, that is not by many derided, exploded, and blasphemed; and that your Adversaries of the Church of England, whom you are so angry with, for saying that you make a Buzz and a Noise, and trouble the mindes of men with unintelligible notions, are such Scoffers, that if any one shall plead the necessity of the Assistance of the Spirit for the due performance of Duties, he shall hardly escape from being notably derided by them. I say, if you go on in this manner, surely you must forget all the while that there is a day coming, when you must appear before the Tribunal of the Great God, to give an account of your Writings. But as for our selves, to use your own words, I shall not trouble my self about an accusation, which is laden with as many Con-*
  
*victions*



*victions of Forgery, as there are persons against whom you level these your uncharitable and malicious suggestions.*

Let any indifferent man read your *Preface*, where you pretend to give a Summary Account of your Book; and say, if the principal designe of it were not to possess your *Readers* with an opinion, that it is our blaspheming the Doctrine of the *Aids* of the Holy Spirit, which enkindled your zeal against us; and that you have bestirred your self in the Book, principally to make it good against all our opposition, that we cannot do the Will of God without them.

But now if you light upon a Reader so *unfortunate* to your self, as will take the pains to compare you and your self together, your *Preface* with the greatest part of your *Book*; he will soon finde, that your *Preface* was but the *Copy* of your *Countenance*, and not of your *Heart*. For when you come to give us your opinion concerning the Operations of Grace in good earnest; it plainly appears, that 'tis you that deny them to be *Assistances* and *Helps*; and that your true quarrel against us, is because we say they are *Assistances*, not the *only* Causes of Regeneration. For you labour (as I shall shew you further, in the *second Part*) with abundance of words, and with all your might, to prove that mere *Assistance*, how great soever, is utterly insufficient to the conversion of a Sinner; and that Conversion is impossible to be effected, but by a *Physical Irresistible Operation*; which, whether it can be called an Assistance, I leave you to judge, after you have considered these words which are your own: *The most effectual persuasions* of the Holy Spirit (for of them you were

were speaking) cannot prevail with men in the state of Nature to convert themselves, any more than Arguments can prevail with a blinde man to see, or with a dead man to rise from the Grave: and you must not forget that you make as irresistibile an Operation necessary to Conversion, as we suppose to be necessary for the raising of a dead Body. Now you know 'tis to no purpose to perswade a dead man to stir; and by your Argument, 'tis to as little to perswade a man, *dead in Trespasses and Sins*, to Repent. But would it not be also a most absurd thing to say that God *assists* a dead body to be alive again? Whoever is said to *assist* another to do any thing, is not supposed to do it *all* himself, much less by an irresistibile Power; but the person that is *assisted* is supposed to contribute his own endeavour towards the thing. Now a dead Body can do nothing towards its own Resurrection, and therefore is incapable of being assisted to rise; and if God raiseth it to life, he must do *all* himself. And do you not therefore make a Sinner incapable of being converted by the *assistance* of the Holy Spirit?

If you do not see this Consequence, pray will you acknowledge your own plain words, where you give us your sence of that saying of the Apostle, ascribing the honour of all he did to the Grace of God: *Not I, but the grace of God which was in me*, 1 Cor. 15. 10. For thus you argue from thence: Suppose now that God by his Grace doth no more but *A I D*, *A S S I S T*, and *E X C I T E* the Will in its actions, that he doth not effectually work all the Gracious actions of our Souls in all our duties; that is, that he doth not do all himself; the Proposition would hold on the other hand, not Grace, but I, seeing the principal relation of the effect is un-

P. 470.



to the *next and immediate Cause*, and thence bath its denomination. These are your own words, wherein you do not onely deny *Regeneration*, but, which is much stranger, even the *Good* which regenerate men do, to be the effect of divine Assistance; and you deny this in such plain terms, that you allow them not to be the *next cause* of the good they do; as if *S. Paul* had meant, that in truth he had not laboured at all; though he plainly said, *I laboured abundantly*. And thus you plainly make Believing, Repenting, and Labouring, not to be so much as *our own acts*, but purely the acts of *God*; so that we do not believe and obey, but, according to you, *God* does all this for us; not so much as *making us* to believe, and obey, as 'tis impossible he should, without making us the *next and immediate cause* of our doing so. Can you read these words of yours without blushing, if you remember your crafty *Preface*, where you were all for the *Aids* and *Assistances* of the Spirit, and put your self into such a combustion to defend them, as if *Pelagius* were risen from the dead? You knew well enough that we do believe, *God* doth *AID* and *ASSIST* us by his Grace; and that no body but your self, and such as you, denies *Conversion* and *Perseverance* to be the effects of divine *Assistance*; onely you strained a point with your Conscience, and cast the *Odium* of so detestable a Doctrine upon us in your *Preface*, to make all the reviling Speeches you bestow on us in your *Book* go down the better with your *Readers*.

But this Artifice of yours is not confined to the *Preface*, but used also in divers places of your *Book*: I shall give you but one instance of it at present. In the fifth *Chapter* of the second *Book* you pretend to reconcile the usefulness of the  
*Com-*



*Commands, Threatnings, Promises, and Exhortations*  
*of the Scripture*; with the promised *Aids* of the  
 Spirit, and ascribing all that is good in us to the  
 Grace of God. For this you say is *the princi-* P. 166  
*pal difficulty wherewith some men seek to entangle and*  
*perplex the Grace of God.* Who you mean by *some*  
*men*, your Followers, and we, understand well e-  
 nough; but you know your Adversaries do not  
 so much as believe that there is *any difficulty* at  
 all in reconciling the assistances of Grace, with the  
 usefulness of Motives; and then they cannot *seek*  
*to entangle the Grace of God with this difficulty.* Now  
 this is your way very often; when you talk of the  
 Objections that are made against supposing the  
 Grace by which we are converted to be *irresistible*,  
 you make it your business to shew that these Ob-  
 jections do not lie against saying that the Opera-  
 tions of the Spirit are *Aids* and *Assistances*; as  
 here in this place you say, *If there be any opposition* P. 167. ]  
*between the Commands of Duty, and the Promises of*  
*Grace, it is either because the nature of man is not*  
*meet to be commanded, or because it needs not to be*  
*assisted*; and then you say very well, that *what the*  
*Holy Spirit doth in us, he doth by us, and our duty*  
*is to apply our selves unto his commands, according to*  
*the conviction of our mindes, and his work it is to en-*  
*able us to perform them.* Very good! All this we  
 heartily believe; but now the Doctrine we *seek*  
*to entangle by the fore-mentioned difficulty, is, that*  
*men cannot be converted, but by such an almighty O-*  
*peration, as that which made us out of nothing, and*  
*will hereafter raise our dead bodies to Life.* And  
 now I cannot understand why you should so of-  
 ten attempt to *disentangle* the Doctrine of the *Aids*  
 of Grace, from the former Objection, which does  
 not lie against it; but because you have a minde  
 to perswade the world that *some men say, we can*  
 Y keep

keep the Commands of God without the help of his Grace. Indeed in one place you apply the Objection as it ought to be, *viz.* against your own Doctrine; (and I intend to let you see shortly that you have not taken it off) but this is an argument that you had no other meaning in applying it wrong, and so changing the state of the Question between us, but to make the most odious representation of us you could devise. And now I take my leave of you for a while, wishing that you may hereafter write with the clearness of a Doctor, the good temper of a Gentleman, and the sincerity of a Christian; and then we shall be very forward to give you that respect which is due to your abilities.

To sum up all that hath been said in this Chapter; the Holy Spirit of God doth in *that manner* work his Graces in us, that they are still the genuine effects of *the Evidence*, and the *motives* of the Gospel, of the *natural* use of our *Faculties* of Understanding and Will; and of our own *Care* and *Diligence* in using the *external* means of Grace. His Operations in us, make us capable of recovering our selves by *degrees*; and all the while there is no *sensible difference* between them and the natural Operations of our mindes; and yet we are sure that we have his *Assistance* and Help in all the good we do, and without it can do nothing at all to saving purposes.

To affirm more *particularly* what is the *manner* of the Holy Spirit's Operations in us, I dare not; unless I had warrant, which I think I have not, from the holy Scripture so to do. And if this be *all* which the Scripture lets us know concerning *it*, we have good reason to think that *no more is needful* to be known by us.

SECT.



## SECT. 7.

Thus I have, through the blessing of God, finished the *First Part* of my Undertaking; and given you a plain account of that which I believe to be the true sense of the Holy Scriptures, concerning those Operations of the Holy Spirit, which are promised in the Gospel to all Ages of the Church. I do not know that I have swerved in the least from the sense of the antient Church, in any thing I have said upon this subject; and I am the more perswaded that I have not done so, being very confident, that I have not at all departed from the Doctrine of the Church of *England* in this matter; the judgement whereof I am prepared to leave to my Superiors.

I had observed that some late Writers, especially, have represented the Grace of the Holy Ghost, under such *notions* as are either intricate and unintelligible; or inconsistent with the great ends of Religion, and of fatal consequence to the Souls of men: *Those* of them that cannot be understood, serving onely to the multiplying of idle Questions, and frivolous Disputes; and those that are, ministring either to unreasonable Presumption, or incurable Despair. Therefore when the *Streams* were so muddy and impure, I thought it was the best way to go to that *Fountain* of Truth, the holy *Word of God*; and to guide all my thoughts of this matter by what I could discern there. And truly I found, that although the Doctrine of *Grace*, as it has been tampered withal by men that serve a Cause, and as it has been debased by humane mixtures, and inventions, is, at best, a subject of



unprofitable talk ; yet, as it is represented in the holy Scriptures, it is clear and plain to the understanding, and likewise a most powerful motive to Godliness.

How nearly I have kept to the fence of Holy Writ, I must leave you to judge : As for the Reader who is yet in any thing otherwise perswaded than I am, if he has used *diligence* and *sincerity* in *examining*, as I know my self to have done in *considering* all I have written ; where we do not agree, I hope God will pardon the errour, on which side soever it lies.

I think it cannot be denied that I have in some measure expressed my meaning plainly, easily, naturally ; which a man needs not be ashamed to do, who believes that he speaks the truth. I have neither pretended to explain things that are not intelligible, nor made any thing *difficult* to understand, by affecting obscurity of expression.

As for the profitableness of this Discourse, it cannot be better judged of, than by that which should be the end of all Writings of this nature, *viz.* the promoting of true Godliness. And certainly if the true Doctrine of the Operations of the Holy Spirit, be that which I have here offered to your consideration, it does apparently render all wicked men inexcusable, that live under the Gospel ; and makes highly for the encouragement of Religion. This will appear by surveying the three General Heads of this Discourse ; for by so doing, it may easily be shewn that there is nothing wanting to make the promise of *the Holy Spirit*, as it has been explained, the most powerful motive to the study of godliness and virtue, that it can be supposed to be. For, 1. There

1. There is nothing wanting in respect of the *end* of this promise, and of those effects for the producing of which in us, the Operations of the Holy Spirit are promised. For they are *all* Christian virtues whatsoever; *all* sorts of qualifications that are needful to our eternal happiness. And therefore we need not doubt to strive against that *sin*, which does most *easily beset us*; nor sit down in despair of obtaining that *Grace* or *Virtue* which is most contrary to our corrupt affections and customs: for if God will give the Holy Spirit for all needful purposes, he will bestow a more plentiful measure of his Grace, for the subduing of *that sin*, and the gaining of *that virtue*; because here his assistance is most needful; and he that hath promised his Spirit to answer *all* our needs, will not deny us, when we ask him to supply the *greatest* of all.

2. There is nothing wanting in the promise of *the Holy Spirit*, to make it such a motive in respect of *those to whom* the promise is made; because it is made to *every one* that believes the Gospel; to every one, I say, under a possible condition; so that none of us can have any reason to fear that we are shut out of the Promise; for I have shewn you it lies open to *all*, and we cannot lose the benefit of it, but by excluding our selves. Besides, the condition of obtaining special Grace from God, being that of importunate *asking*; we are hereby moved to earnest and frequent Prayers, which, you know, is one branch of pious endeavour. And then the condition of more plentiful Communications of the divine Spirit, being a careful improvement of those measures of Grace which we have now obtained; this also is a plain and powerful motive to every Christian that has  
pro-



proceeded more or less, in the way of Salvation, to be as fruitful as he can in every good work, and to follow after holiness, looking diligently lest he fail of the Grace of God.

3. There is nothing wanting in this promise to make it a strong motive to the study of godliness, if we consider the manner of the Holy Spirit's Operations in us; which, as you have heard, will not be effectual without our own Consideration, and Care, and Watchfulness; because God hath promised his Spirit to assist our Endeavours, but not to make us good men without them; and our recovery still depends as much upon our diligence in the event, as if it depended upon nothing else.

Wherefore in all respects, the promise of the Holy Spirit, as it is expressed in the Scriptures, is a most prevalent motive to the study of Piety and Virtue: And since it was my designe from the first to recover it to this use, out of the hands of those men that had made it good for nothing, I could not conclude better than with shewing you plainly wherein the force of this Promise lies, to make us all careful to *Work out our own Salvation.*

*O God, forasmuch as without thee, we are not able to please thee; mercifully grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our Hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*





The Author's distance from *London* hath  
occasioned these *Errata's*, which the  
Reader may correct.

**P**Age 33. In the Margin r. P. 260. p. 61. line 12, for  
these are the r. there are other. p. 93. l. 18. for end r.  
kinde. p. 105. l. 6. for to his t. to be. p. 163. l.  
30. for proportion r. proposition. p. 191. l. 13. for there is  
r. there is said to be. Ibid. l. 22. for inherent r. immediate.  
p. 310. l. 28. for having by r. having. p. 322. l. 10. for  
may r. my.